

**ASSESSMENT OF UNICEF'S  
CONTRIBUTION TO UN REFORM  
AND ITS IMPACT ON UNICEF:  
UN REFORM UNDER THE  
UN DEVELOPMENT GROUP**



**EVALUATION  
REPORT**

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This evaluation was undertaken by Steven M. Mendelsohn and Alexander Mackenzie, external evaluators supported by UNICEF, with guidance from members of the Evaluation Office as well as key informants from UNICEF and other UN agencies.

The purpose of the report is to assess the situation, facilitate the exchange of knowledge and perspectives among UNICEF staff and to propose measures to address the concerns raised. The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the policies or the views of UNICEF.

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## **PREFACE**

In the first semester of 2004, UNICEF commissioned a pair of evaluations on the theme UNICEF's Contribution to UN Reform and its Impact on UNICEF. One evaluation looked at the humanitarian sector, the other at UN Reform issues managed under the UN Development Group. Two efforts were required to ensure a proper match of consultant expertise to the issues, and in recognition of the differing institutional bodies and processes at work.

This assessment attempts to provide a comprehensive examination of UNICEF's involvement and contribution to the mainstreaming of UN reform over the last several years, with a specific emphasis on the impacts at the country level programming. The evaluators have highlighted UNICEF's contributions, accomplishments, continuing challenges and organizational impacts resulting from UN Reform, and have identified the key issues that have surfaced during the evaluation study.

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Readers interested in this work may also like to read the chapeau report which synthesizes the findings and recommendations of both studies as well as the assessment of UNICEF contribution to the UN reform and its impact on the humanitarian sector. These are available on the UNICEF web site, or by contacting the Evaluation Office.

The review owes a debt of gratitude to the consultants and the many willing and helpful interviewees who contributed their time and insights on behalf of UNICEF, other UN agencies and offices, and NGOs.

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## ACRONYMS

CCA	Common Country Assessment
CCC	Core Corporate Commitment
CEE/CIS	Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltics Regional Office
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CO	Country Office
COAR	Country Office Annual Report
CP	Country Programme
CPAC	Country Programme Action Plan
CPD	Country Programme Document
CPMP	Country Programme Management Plan
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DfID	Department for International Development
EAPRO	East Asia & Pacific Regional Office
ECHA	Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs
ESAR	Eastern and Southern Africa Region
ESARO	Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office
ExComs	Executive Committees of the undg comprising of UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP and UNDP
ExDir	Executive Directive
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FSIAS	Field Services and Inter Agency Support
GMT	Greenwich Mean Time
GFATM	Headquarters Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HRBAP	Human rights based approach to programming
HQ	Headquarters
IA	Inter-agency
IASC	Inter Agency Standing Committee
IT	Information Technology
ILO	International Labour Office
IMEP	Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MENARO	Middle East and North Africa Regional Office
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MG	Management Group
MTR	Mid-term Review
MTSP	Medium-term strategic plan
OIA	Office of International Affairs
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization (WHO)
PG	Programme Group
PG/MG	Joint Programme and Management Working Group
ProMS	Programme Manager System
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

QSA	Quality support and assurance
RBA	Rights based approach
RBM	Results based management
RC	Resident Coordinator
RO	Regional Office
ROSA	Regional Office for South Asia
RTM	Resource transfer modalities
RMT	Resource mobilization target
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SIPs	Sector Investment Programs
S&H	Simplification and Harmonization
SPOOS	Senior Programme and Operations Officers
SWAPs	Sector wide approach to programming
SMG	Senior Management Group
SURFS	Sub-regional research facilities
TACRO	The Americas and Caribbean Regional Office
TCPR	Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UN DESA	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDGO	United Nations Development Group Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNETE	UN Emergency Team
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WCARO	West and Central Africa Regional Office
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of the evaluation was to complete a comprehensive examination of UNICEF's involvement and contribution to the mainstreaming of UN reform over the last several years, with a specific emphasis on the impacts at the country level programming. The methodology included documentation and information review, a limited number of key informant interviews, country office interviews using an in-depth e-mailed questionnaire, headquarters consultations with three Working Groups, consultations with the evaluation management team, and feedback from the Reference Group. A separate, but linked study provided an overview of UNICEF's contribution to Humanitarian Assistance. Budgetary and time constraints affected the choice of methodologies. No field visits were carried out, nor were interviews held with regional offices.

UNICEF has made a strong effort to engage in UN reform at the headquarters, regional and country level. It is generally recognized both by external and internal observers that UNICEF has provided intellectual leadership and has been a strong proponent of normative approaches such as the Human Rights Based Approach to Programming. At the headquarters level, UNICEF has contributed significantly to a number of initiatives undertaken in the resident and humanitarian coordinator system, simplification and harmonization of country level programming procedures, and the regional quality assurance system. UNICEF has also contributed heavily to advances in common premises and services, and to the conceptual base for thematic groups, joint programming and resource transfer modalities. In short, both internal and external observers agree that UNICEF has been a key partner and an essential contributor to progress in UN reform in the UN Development Group.

The study found, based on a survey of country offices, that while UNICEF sometimes does not have the impact it seeks, in most instances, the progress in UN reform is significantly due to UNICEF's involvement, or almost no UN reform issue is decided without UNICEF involvement. The country offices believe that they play a significant role in assisting the UNCTs push ahead with UN reform. The study indicated that:

- UNICEF is often given a leadership position in their countries;
- Only UNDP and UNICEF have the resources to fully engage in each of the multiple aspects of UN reform; and
- Significant progress in UNCT often results because of UNICEF's involvement.

However, while UNICEF has made a great deal of effort to ensure the harmonization of its systems with those at the interagency level, it has not paid sufficient attention to the needs for simplification and rationalization of its own internal processes. This has resulted in a heavier workload for staff. The Evaluation indicated that staff members feel that they have invested a lot of time in UN reform, and although staff believe that there have been benefits, they now feel that, qualitatively, the costs in time exceed the returns. Most importantly, both UNICEF and external observers have not seen returns to UNICEF as a result of what should be increased confidence in the UN system by donors or an upturn in the flow of resources to the UN system as a whole, including UNICEF, as a result of UN reform.

An important issue for the evaluation was assessing benefits to UNICEF of UN reform. The study concluded, that most of the country offices benefited in some way from UN reform. Primarily, country offices noted that UN Reform permitted UNICEF to exert more influence over the UN system in terms of the issues of importance to UNICEF such as the human rights based approach, and child protection issues. Some offices also noted that UNICEF's participation and influence on the CCA permits a stronger focus on issues related to children.

UNICEF country offices note that the CCA and UNDAF have been discussed at the highest political level (e.g. presidential level), which has enhanced both the visibility of UN coordination, UNICEF programming, issues affecting women and children, and how the UN will jointly respond. UNICEF was seen as a team player by other agencies and government partners, thereby promoting collaboration both ways. Finally, UN reform also improved the inter-agency dialogue and the ability of UNICEF to promote its agenda in an inter-agency forum.

However, the study also concluded that the heavy commitment of time needed to manage the many aspects of UN reform and the concern that UNICEF's image and ability to dialogue directly with government may be lost, pose some of the fundamental negatives in the minds of country offices.

It is widely recognized that in the early years of UN Reform, there were recommendations made that suggested a merger of the UN development agencies. These threatened the independence of UNICEF as an organization. Although they were never implemented, they have left a lingering concern in the minds of some UNICEF staff about the institutional consequences of UN Reform. As a result, although UNICEF has largely engaged in UN Reform, and although broadly speaking, staff have worked hard to ensure that UNICEF plays an important role in UN Reform developments, there is some evident ambivalence internally towards UN reform.

This ambivalence is seen by some as reluctance to fully engage in UN Reform efforts and a belief by external observers that UNICEF still has "lines in the sand" that it will not cross. This ambivalence was also reflected in surveys of country offices, which do not always have a clear idea as to how far UN Reform will progress, and how far they can or should go in joint programming efforts with other agencies. Some internal observers have said that UNICEF must develop a clearer long-term vision of where it wants to go with UN reform.

Some of the reasons for ambivalence on the part of UNICEF and hesitancy to fully engage relate to the perceived risks to UNICEF staff of a loss of identity. UNICEF has a strong brand image and an excellent reputation internationally as an effective on-the-ground organization that can program effectively in developmental, transitional and humanitarian situations. UNICEF has also been effective in public fundraising through its network of national committees.

UNICEF will continually face a challenge in balancing its identity and visibility objectives with the need to be part of one UN and participating in broader goals of coherency of the UN system. External perceptions as reflected in interviews and evidence from case studies indicate that ensuring that the UNICEF image and credibility are retained remains a challenge for UNICEF.

Finally, the Evaluation underscored the difference between true leadership and strong participation in UN Reform efforts. External observers perceive UNICEF as an exemplary contributor to UN Reform, but that it has not used its leadership capacity to push the system to greater levels of coherence and effectiveness. Some believe that UNICEF is the cornerstone of the UN Development Group. If UNICEF does not fully embrace its leadership role and does not work with donors and other UN bodies to undertake broader changes within the system, there is a danger that the UN Development Group will be further marginalized.

In the following sections, the reviewers have highlighted UNICEF's contributions, accomplishments, continuing challenges and organizational impacts resulting from UN Reform, and have identified the key issues that have surfaced during the evaluation study.

## RÉSUMÉ

L'évaluation se proposait d'analyser de façon exhaustive la participation et la contribution de l'UNICEF à l'intégration aux activités principales de la réforme de l'ONU ces dernières années, en privilégiant l'impact de cette contribution au niveau de la programmation par pays. La méthodologie retenue comprenait les éléments suivants : une étude de documents et d'informations, un nombre limité d'entretiens avec des informateurs clés, des entretiens dans les bureaux de pays réalisés à partir d'un questionnaire approfondi adressé par courriel, des consultations menées au siège avec trois Groupes de travail, des consultations avec l'équipe de gestion des évaluations et les réactions du Groupe de référence. Une étude distincte mais connexe a donné un aperçu de la contribution de l'UNICEF à l'assistance humanitaire. Les difficultés budgétaires et le temps disponible ont affecté le choix des méthodologies. On n'a effectué aucune visite sur le terrain et l'on ne s'est entretenu avec aucun bureau régional.

L'UNICEF a participé très activement à la réforme de l'ONU au siège et aux niveaux régional et national. Les observateurs extérieurs et internes s'accordent généralement à reconnaître qu'il a assumé un rôle intellectuel de premier plan et a été un partisan convaincu d'approches normatives telles que l'approche de la programmation fondée sur les droits de l'homme. Au siège, il a apporté une contribution importante à un certain nombre d'initiatives lancées aux niveaux du système des coordonnateurs résidents et coordonnateurs des questions humanitaires, de la simplification et de l'harmonisation des procédures de la programmation de pays et du système régional d'assurance de la qualité. Par ailleurs, il a fait considérablement avancer la question des locaux et services communs, ainsi que celles des fondements théoriques des groupes thématiques, de la programmation commune et des modalités de transfert de ressources. En bref, les observateurs tant internes qu'extérieurs conviennent que l'UNICEF a été un partenaire clé et un participant indispensable à la réforme de l'ONU entreprise sous l'égide du Groupe des Nations Unies pour le développement (GNUD).

L'étude a permis de constater, à partir d'une enquête menée auprès des bureaux de pays, que l'UNICEF n'a quelquefois pas l'impact recherché, mais que, dans la plupart des cas, les progrès de la réforme de l'ONU sont dus pour une part importante à la participation de l'UNICEF ou que pratiquement aucune question liée à la réforme de l'ONU n'est décidée sans la participation de l'UNICEF. Les bureaux de pays estiment jouer un rôle important en aidant les équipes de pays des Nations Unies à faire avancer la réforme de l'ONU. L'étude a montré que:

- Un rôle de chef de file est souvent confié à l'UNICEF dans les pays considérés;
- Seuls le PNUD et l'UNICEF disposent des ressources nécessaires pour participer pleinement à chacun des multiples aspects de la réforme de l'ONU;
- Les progrès appréciables enregistrés par l'équipe de pays des Nations Unies sont souvent dus à la participation de l'UNICEF.

Toutefois, si l'UNICEF n'a épargné aucun effort pour harmoniser ses systèmes avec ceux de l'échelon interorganisations, il n'a pas accordé suffisamment d'attention à la nécessité de simplifier et de rationaliser ses propres processus internes, ce qui a alourdi la charge de travail de son personnel. L'Évaluation a montré que les membres du personnel estiment avoir investi beaucoup de temps dans la réforme de l'ONU et, tout en étant convaincus que des avantages en ont été retirés, ils pensent à présent que, sur le plan qualitatif, le coût en termes de temps dépasse les avantages. Surtout, ni les observateurs de l'UNICEF ni les observateurs extérieurs n'ont constaté l'existence des avantages découlant de ce qui devrait être un regain de confiance dans le système des Nations Unies de la part des donateurs ou une reprise des flux

de ressources à destination de l'ensemble du système des Nations Unies, l'UNICEF compris, consécutive à la réforme de l'ONU.

L'étude se proposait notamment d'évaluer les avantages que l'UNICEF avait retirés de la réforme de l'ONU. Elle a conclu que la plupart des bureaux de pays avaient profité d'une manière ou d'une autre de la réforme. Pour l'essentiel, les bureaux de pays ont noté que la réforme de l'ONU permettait à l'UNICEF d'influer davantage sur le système des Nations Unies en ce qui concerne les questions importantes pour l'UNICEF, telles que l'approche fondée sur les droits de l'homme et les questions liées à la protection de l'enfant. Certains bureaux ont également noté que la participation de l'UNICEF au bilan commun de pays (BCP) et l'influence qu'il exerçait à ce sujet permettent de focaliser davantage l'attention sur les questions intéressant les enfants.

Les bureaux de pays de l'UNICEF relèvent que le BCP et le Plan-cadre des Nations Unies pour l'aide au développement (PNUAD) ont été examinés au plus haut niveau politique (présidentiel, par exemple), ce qui a contribué à mieux faire connaître la coordination de l'ONU, la programmation de l'UNICEF, les questions intéressant les femmes et les enfants et les modalités d'intervention commune des Nations Unies. L'esprit d'équipe de l'UNICEF a été remarqué par les autres organismes et par les partenaires gouvernementaux, ce qui a favorisé la collaboration dans les deux sens. Enfin, la réforme de l'ONU a amélioré le dialogue interorganisations et la capacité de l'UNICEF de promouvoir ses objectifs dans une instance interorganisations.

Toutefois, l'étude a également conclu que le lourd investissement en temps nécessaire pour gérer tous les aspects de la réforme de l'ONU et le risque de voir disparaître l'image de marque de l'UNICEF en tant que partisan du dialogue direct avec le gouvernement et sa capacité en la matière figurent parmi les principaux aspects jugés négatifs par les bureaux de pays.

On considère souvent que dans les premières années de la réforme de l'ONU, des recommandations avaient été formulées tendant à une fusion des organismes des Nations Unies s'occupant du développement. Elles menaçaient l'UNICEF en tant qu'organisation indépendante. Elles n'ont jamais été suivies d'effet, mais elles ont suscité dans l'esprit de certains membres du personnel de l'UNICEF une certaine inquiétude au sujet des conséquences institutionnelles de la réforme de l'ONU. Il s'ensuit que, si l'UNICEF a largement participé à la réforme et si, dans l'ensemble, le personnel n'a épargné aucun effort pour faire en sorte que l'UNICEF joue un rôle important dans sa mise en œuvre, il n'en existe pas moins au sein de l'UNICEF des sentiments mêlés à l'égard de cette réforme.

D'aucuns voient dans cette attitude ambivalente un manque d'empressement à participer pleinement à la réforme de l'ONU et les observateurs extérieurs pensent qu'il y a des limites au-delà desquelles l'UNICEF n'est pas prêt à aller. Cette attitude se retrouve dans les enquêtes réalisées auprès des bureaux de pays, qui ne voient pas toujours très bien jusqu'où ira la réforme de l'ONU ni jusqu'où ils pourraient ou devraient mener la programmation commune avec les autres organismes. Certains observateurs internes ont indiqué que l'UNICEF doit élaborer un projet à long terme précisant jusqu'où il entend accompagner la réforme de l'ONU.

L'attitude ambivalente de l'UNICEF et sa réticence à s'engager à fond tiennent en partie au risque d'une perte d'identité ressenti par son personnel. L'UNICEF a une forte image de marque et jouit d'une excellente réputation au plan international en tant qu'organisation de terrain capable d'un travail de programmation efficace dans des situations de développement, de

transition et d'intervention humanitaire. Par ailleurs, l'UNICEF sait faire appel à la générosité du public à travers son réseau de comités nationaux.

Il sera toujours difficile pour l'UNICEF de concilier ses objectifs en matière d'identité et de visibilité et la nécessité de faire partie intégrante d'une seule ONU et de participer à la réalisation des objectifs de cohérence concernant l'ensemble du système des Nations Unies. À en juger par les opinions extérieures tirées des entretiens et les données fournies par les études de cas, le maintien de son image et de sa crédibilité demeure une tâche difficile pour l'UNICEF.

Enfin, l'Évaluation a souligné la différence existant entre un rôle véritablement mobilisateur et une forte participation à la réforme de l'ONU. Pour les observateurs extérieurs, l'UNICEF apporte une contribution exemplaire à cette réforme, mais il n'a pas utilisé sa capacité d'entraînement pour élever le système à des niveaux de cohérence et d'efficacité supérieurs. Certains pensent que l'UNICEF est la pierre d'angle du Groupe des Nations Unies pour le développement. Si l'UNICEF ne joue pas pleinement son rôle d'animateur et n'œuvre pas avec les donateurs et les autres organismes des Nations Unies en vue d'instituer des changements plus importants au sein du système, le Groupe des Nations Unies pour le développement court le risque de se faire encore davantage marginaliser.

Dans les sections qui suivent, les auteurs ont mis en évidence les contributions et les réalisations de l'UNICEF, les difficultés auxquelles il doit encore faire face et les impacts organisationnels découlant de la réforme de l'ONU, et ont recensé les principaux problèmes apparus pendant l'évaluation.



## RESUMEN EJECUTIVO

El objetivo de la evaluación fue realizar un examen exhaustivo de la participación y contribución del UNICEF en lo relativo a la integración de la reforma de las Naciones Unidas durante estos últimos años, haciendo especial hincapié en la repercusión sobre la programación a nivel de los países. La metodología incluía un examen de la documentación y la información, entrevistas con un número limitado de informadores, así como con las oficinas nacionales, utilizando un cuestionario muy detallado enviado por correo electrónico, consultas en la sede con tres Grupos de Trabajo, así como con el equipo de evaluación de la gestión, y retroalimentación procedente del Grupo de Referencia. Un estudio independiente, pero relacionado con la cuestión, ofreció un panorama general de la contribución del UNICEF en la esfera de la asistencia humanitaria. Las restricciones presupuestarias y las limitaciones de tiempo afectaron a la elección de las metodologías. No se realizaron visitas al terreno, ni se realizaron entrevistas en las oficinas regionales.

El UNICEF ha realizado un enorme esfuerzo para participar en la reforma de las Naciones Unidas en la sede y a nivel de las regiones y los países. Observadores, tanto internos como externos, aceptan en general que el UNICEF ha ofrecido liderazgo intelectual y ha sido un enérgico defensor de los enfoques normativos, como el enfoque de programación basado en los derechos humanos. A nivel de la sede, el UNICEF ha ofrecido una importante contribución a diversas iniciativas emprendidas en el sistema de coordinador residente y coordinador humanitario, a la simplificación y armonización de los procedimientos de programación a nivel de los países y al sistema regional de garantía de la calidad. El UNICEF también ha contribuido enormemente a los avances logrados en cuanto a instalaciones y servicios comunes, y a la base de conceptos a disposición de los grupos temáticos, a la programación conjunta y a las modalidades de transferencia de recursos. En resumidas cuentas, los observadores tanto internos como externos están de acuerdo en que el UNICEF ha sido un copartícipe fundamental y que ha contribuido de forma esencial a los avances en la reforma de las Naciones Unidas en el marco de Grupo de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo.

El estudio descubrió, sobre la base de una encuesta realizada en las oficinas nacionales, que, si bien el UNICEF en ocasiones no logra la repercusión que está buscando, en la mayoría de los casos los avances conseguidos en la reforma de las Naciones Unidas se deben en gran parte a la participación del UNICEF, o que casi ninguna cuestión relativa a la reforma se decide sin participación del UNICEF. Las oficinas para los países creen que desempeñan una función importante al asistir a los equipos nacionales de las Naciones Unidas para que lleven adelante la reforma. El estudio puso de manifiesto que:

- Al UNICEF se le otorga a menudo una posición rectora en sus países;
- Sólo el PNUD y el UNICEF disponen de los recursos que les permiten participar plenamente en cada uno de los múltiples aspectos de la reforma de las Naciones Unidas; y
- Los avances esenciales en los equipos nacionales de las Naciones Unidas se logran a menudo porque el UNICEF participa en ellos.

No obstante, si bien el UNICEF ha hecho un considerable esfuerzo para garantizar la armonización de sus sistemas con los del sistema interorganismos, no ha prestado atención suficiente a las necesidades de simplificación y racionalización de sus propios procesos internos. Ello se ha traducido en una mayor carga de trabajo para el personal. La evaluación indicó que el personal considera que ha invertido mucho tiempo en la reforma de las Naciones Unidas y, a pesar de que entienden que ha habido beneficios, consideran ahora que, en términos cualitativos, los costos de tiempo superan los dividendos obtenidos. Y, lo que es más

importante, tanto el UNICEF como los observadores externos no han comprobado que el UNICEF se haya beneficiado todo lo que debiera –a resultas de la reforma de las Naciones Unidas– de una mayor confianza por parte de los donantes, o de un aumento de las corrientes de recursos hacia el sistema de las Naciones Unidas en su conjunto, lo que incluye al UNICEF.

Una cuestión importante para la evaluación fue averiguar qué beneficios había obtenido el UNICEF de la reforma de las Naciones Unidas. El estudio llegó a la conclusión de que la mayoría de las oficinas nacionales se habían beneficiado de alguna manera de la reforma de las Naciones Unidas. Básicamente, las oficinas nacionales observaron que la reforma de las Naciones Unidas permitió al UNICEF ejercer una mayor influencia sobre el sistema de las Naciones Unidas en lo relativo a los temas que son de importancia para el UNICEF, como el enfoque basado en los derechos humanos y las cuestiones relativas a la protección de los derechos del niño. Algunas oficinas observaron también que la participación del UNICEF y su influencia en la evaluación común para los países permiten centrarse más enérgicamente en las cuestiones relacionadas con la infancia.

Las oficinas nacionales del UNICEF observan que la evaluación común para los países y el Marco de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo se han estudiado al más alto nivel político (es decir, a nivel de la presidencia), lo que ha mejorado no sólo la visibilidad de la coordinación a nivel del sistema, sino también la programación del UNICEF, las cuestiones que afectan a las mujeres y a los niños y la capacidad de las Naciones Unidas para dar una respuesta conjunta. Otros organismos y entidades gubernamentales consideraron que el UNICEF era un jugador de equipo, por lo que promocionaba la colaboración en ambos sentidos. Por último, la reforma de las Naciones Unidas también mejoró el diálogo interorganismos y la capacidad del UNICEF para promover su programa en un foro interorganismos.

No obstante, el estudio llegó también a la conclusión de que la gran cantidad de tiempo que es preciso dedicar a gestionar los múltiples aspectos de la reforma de las Naciones Unidas y la preocupación de que la imagen del UNICEF y su capacidad para dialogar directamente con los gobiernos pueda verse en entredicho, constituyen algunas de las inquietudes fundamentales que preocupan a quienes trabajan en las oficinas nacionales.

La opinión casi unánime es que durante los primeros años de la reforma de las Naciones Unidas se formularon recomendaciones que sugerían una fusión de los organismos de desarrollo de las Naciones Unidas. Ello supuso una amenaza para la independencia del UNICEF como organización. Si bien nunca se llevaron a la práctica, dichas recomendaciones han dejado una constante preocupación en las mentes de algunos miembros del personal del UNICEF sobre las consecuencias institucionales de la reforma de las Naciones Unidas. En consecuencia, si bien el UNICEF se ha comprometido en profundidad con la reforma de las Naciones Unidas, y aunque, hablando en términos generales, el personal ha trabajado con ahínco para garantizar que el UNICEF desempeñe una función importante en las nuevas iniciativas que afecten a la reforma de las Naciones Unidas, existe una cierta ambivalencia a nivel interno en relación con dicha reforma.

Algunos consideran que esta ambivalencia consiste en una cierta resistencia a participar plenamente en las actividades de reforma de las Naciones Unidas, así como en la creencia, mantenida por observadores externos, de que hay determinadas “líneas sobre la arena” que el UNICEF no está dispuesto a cruzar. Esta ambivalencia se vio también reflejada en las encuestas de las oficinas nacionales, en las que no siempre existe una idea clara de cuán lejos se puede llegar en la reforma de las Naciones Unidas, y hasta dónde se puede ir en las actividades de programación conjunta con otros organismos. Algunos observadores internos

han afirmado que el UNICEF debe desarrollar una idea a largo plazo más clara sobre adónde quiere llegar con la reforma de las Naciones Unidas.

Algunas de las razones para la ambivalencia por parte del UNICEF y sus dudas a la hora de comprometerse plenamente guardan relación con los riesgos que el personal percibe en términos de pérdida de identidad. El UNICEF tiene una poderosa imagen de marca y una excelente reputación, a nivel internacional, de organización efectiva sobre el terreno que puede realizar programas con eficacia en situaciones ligadas a contextos de desarrollo, de transición y de operaciones humanitarias. El UNICEF, a través de sus Comités Nacionales, también ha sido eficaz en las actividades de captación de fondos.

El UNICEF continuará afrontando problemas para hallar un equilibrio entre su identidad y sus objetivos en materia de visibilidad y la necesidad de formar parte de unas mismas Naciones Unidas y de asumir objetivos más amplios en materia de coherencia dentro del sistema de las Naciones Unidas. Las percepciones externas que se deducen de las entrevistas y las pruebas obtenidas de los estudios de caso indican que para el UNICEF va a seguir siendo espinoso mantener su imagen y credibilidad.

Por último, la evaluación subrayó la diferencia existente entre un auténtico liderazgo y una participación profusa en las actividades de reforma de las Naciones Unidas. Los observadores externos consideran que el UNICEF es un contribuyente ejemplar a la reforma de las Naciones Unidas, pero que no ha utilizado su capacidad de liderazgo para llevar al sistema hacia mayores niveles de coherencia y eficacia. Algunos creen que el UNICEF es la piedra angular del Grupo de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo. Si el UNICEF no asume plenamente su función rectora y no colabora con donantes y otros organismos de las Naciones Unidas para emprender cambios más amplios dentro del sistema, existe el peligro de que el Grupo de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo quede todavía más marginado.

En las siguientes secciones, los examinadores han subrayado las contribuciones del UNICEF, logros, retos pendientes y repercusiones de organización resultantes de la reforma de las Naciones Unidas, y han señalado los temas fundamentales que han salido a la luz durante el estudio de evaluación.



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Rationale for the Evaluation**

Enabling the UN to act more coherently and effectively at the country level has been a concern of member UN states, donor organisations, programme countries and UN agencies for many years<sup>1</sup>. Reform efforts began in the mid-1970s with efforts to synchronize cycles at country level for programmes of cooperation. Joint reform proposals from the Nordic countries in the mid-1990s called for a radical consolidation of the UN funds and programmes and the unification of the UN's country presence in common offices, with common services.

However, the first comprehensive attempt to simplify and harmonize the operational activities of the UN occurred in 1997 with the Secretary General's report Renewing the UN: A programme for reform<sup>2</sup>. Rather than a narrow, mechanical response to calls for reform, the programme was positioned as a major effort to re-align the United Nations from top to bottom to come to grips with the "sizable gap" between the UN's normative aspirations and its actual accomplishments. Through 29 actions, the reform programme sought to establish "a new leadership culture and management structure, leading to greater unity of purpose, coherence of efforts, and agility" in responding to the needs of the international community. In this, the reform programme was not an end in itself, but rather a means for placing poverty eradication at the centre of development efforts.

The goals of UN reform were to create a leaner, more efficient UN in headquarters and in the field, eliminating costly duplication where possible, increasing communication and cohesion between the political and operational wings, and, most importantly, facilitating the creation of common strategic frameworks within which the various actors could harmonize their activities.

### **1.2 Scope and Review Objectives**

#### **1.2.1 Objective of the Evaluation:**

Although UNICEF has been actively involved in the UN reform process over the last six years, there had been no comprehensive review of UNICEF's contribution to UN reform. There was a need to take stock of what has worked well, what has not and why. The timing is opportune because of the initiation of the second phase of the UN reform process and because of the mid-term review of UNICEF's Medium-Term Strategic Plan.

The objective of this evaluation was to complete a comprehensive examination of UNICEF's involvement and contribution to UN reform over the last several years, with a specific emphasis on the results this involvement has had on country level programming. The emphasis was on the period since the last Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (2002-2003) in order to examine the resulting change, make recommendations on operational activities and inform UNICEF's strategy for its contribution to the next phase of the reform process.

The evaluation process intended to help understand:

- The impact of UN reform on UNICEF and vice versa with particular attention to the effect at national level on the UN system's work on behalf of children and their families;

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<sup>1</sup> COWI, Joint Nordic Assessment of the CCA/UNDAF Process, 2001

<sup>2</sup> Secretary General, Renewing the UN: A programme for reform, UN (A/51/950), 14 July, 1997.

- UNICEF's contribution in quantitative and qualitative terms to the main processes and instruments of UN reform;
- UNICEF's contributions to the promotion of innovative programming methodologies (HRBAP, causality analysis, etc.);
- The systemic gaps worthy of UNICEF's attention; and,
- The strategic priorities that should guide UNICEF's investment in UN reform in the upcoming 2-4 years.

The results should:

- Feed into related review processes (TCPR, MTR of the MTSP, etc.) that likewise will help UNICEF and the UN adjust their strategic directions;
- Provide information for reports to the board on relevant themes (e.g. the 2004 report on Joint Programming);
- Lead to a dissemination of lessons learned and best practices to influence HQ, Regional, and Country level efforts to improve program impacts and maximize efficiency;
- Lead to the incorporation of lessons learned in internal training and quality control efforts (e.g. the PP training; definition of accountabilities); and
- Assist UNICEF in the development of advocacy and negotiating positions with other partners on UN reform and related issues (e.g. PRSPs, SWAPs).

### **1.2.2 Evaluation Themes**

The evaluation focused on four themes that UNICEF management identified as key 'drivers' to the success of the entire UN reform effort.

**Inter-Agency Contributions:** This area examines UNICEF's contribution to the mechanisms and initiatives undertaken to ensure a more cohesive and effective UN presence at the country level. An examination of processes and issues at the headquarters, regional, and country levels meant to help identify how UNICEF interacts with other agencies.

**Strengthening Country Programming Processes/Substance:** This area focuses on the vision, programmatic tools, and instruments and processes that UNICEF uses in collaboration with UN and other partners at country level. It covered both the development aspects of the tools and processes and the dissemination and quality assurance oversight mechanisms.

**Mainstreaming UN reform and inter-agency collaboration within UNICEF:** This area examines UNICEF's institutional response and impact on policies, operational guidance, internal management processes, staff development, etc.

**Impact of UN Reform in UNICEF Programming at Country Level:** This area covers the strategic impact (is the host nation now benefiting from more effective UN cooperation); the reflection of UN system priorities (e.g. joint programming; SIPs/SWAPs); the general process (investment and opportunity costs in UNDAF etc); and Common Services. Two substantive areas were also examined in more detail -HIV/AIDS and Child Protection. HIV-AIDS is an area where inter-UN collaboration has achieved positive results. Child Protection, on the other hand, is an area where inter-UN collaboration is still emerging.

A number of other issues at the headquarters level (e.g. reduction of costs, partnerships affected by UN reform; alignment of corporate policies; etc.) were not addressed during this

review exercise. Budgetary and time constraints limited the review to a few key themes identified by the Evaluation Management Reference Group.

### **1.3 Methodology for the Evaluation**

The overall approach for this study addressed the above mentioned evaluation objectives and issues/questions using the methodologies outlined in the terms of reference.

While all UN staff are, in effect, stakeholders and contribute to the success of UN reform, the evaluation sought the views of those who have the most direct influence on the recent course of UN reform and those whose work must adjust consequently. These included the following:

#### ***1. Internal to UNICEF***

- UNICEF Executive Office
- GMT Members
- Regional Offices
- Country Offices
- HQ Field Services and Inter-Agency Coordination Section
- Other Programme Division, Division of Policy and Planning staff
- HQ staff representing UNICEF in UN Reform bodies
- Staff in Child Protection, HIV-AIDS, and Girls Education

#### ***2. Other UN Bodies Functionally Linked to UNICEF in UN Reform Issues***

- UN Development Group
- UN Development Group Office (UNDGO)
- undg Executive Committee
- UN Secretariat, especially members of existing main UN working groups.
- UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
- Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams

Both primary and secondary sources of information were used to gather information. These included the following methodologies: review of documents; key informant interviews; E-Survey of Field Offices (via Representatives); and consultations and debriefings with the Evaluation Management Team and a Reference Group. Each of these methods is described briefly below.

#### ***3. Documentation and Information Review***

A review of all relevant documentation from the TCPR completed in 2001 on UN Reform and Inter-agency collaboration was undertaken. In addition, an initial review of 2002 and 2003 Country Office Annual Reports (Annex B: UN Reform and Inter-agency Collaboration) indicated that it would be useful to do an in-depth analysis of a sample of up to 30 country offices. This was subsequently done. See **Annex B** for a list of sampled countries.

#### ***4. Key informant interviews***

Through key informant interviews the study team obtained views to assess UNICEF's involvement in and contribution to UN reform (see **Annex A** for a list of interviewees). Informants included both UNICEF staff members and their UN partners in order to compare and contrast the perceptions of the two groups. Interviews were carried out individually or in small

groups using a semi-structured interview guide. The study team conducted sixty (60) key informant interviews. The interview guides are available as part of **Annex C**.

### ***5. Country Office Interviews***

Provision was made to do 18 country office interviews using an in-depth E mailed questionnaire, 16 of whom replied. This permitted a more in-depth exploration of the issues of importance for the evaluation.

The 18 countries were selected on a purposive basis as representative of those countries that completed the CCA/UNDAF pre-2002 and those that completed it post 2002. The countries represented a range of regions, differing programming focus, and different levels of success with the UN reform process. **Annex B** provides a list of the countries selected for the COARS analysis and for completion of the e-mail questionnaire.

### ***6. MTSP MTR Process***

A headquarters consultation, involving three Working Groups, was held and the results were incorporated into the study. The focus of their discussions was on how to make UN reform work for children at the country level.

### ***7. Consultations with the Evaluation Management Team***

Consultations were held on a regular basis with the UNICEF Evaluation Management Team in order to discuss ongoing issues and concerns and to find mechanisms to address these as best as possible within the limitations of the study.

### ***8. Feedback from the Reference Group***

Feedback from the Reference Group was provided to the evaluation team. Feedback included comments on the evaluation methods as well as the substantive findings of the evaluation study.

### ***9. Parallel Study- Humanitarian Assistance***

A separate, but linked study was carried out to provide an overview of UNICEF's contribution to the Humanitarian Sector; to examine in depth the institutional mechanisms and relationships associated with these activities; and to identify ways in which UNICEF can move forward on this agenda. A synthesis report combines the results of the two studies.

## **Limitations of the Study**

Budgetary and time constraints impacted on the choice of methodologies. Field visits were not carried out, nor were key informants contacted from the regional offices. As a result, the concerns facing regional offices were not examined in depth. The 18 country offices to be surveyed were chosen in consultation with UNICEF staff. Limitations in the number of themes that could be covered and the exclusion of areas linked to cost effectiveness, for example, also limited the overall comprehensiveness of the study. However, the material and information gathered still allowed the consultants to reach conclusions on a number of key areas related to UNICEF's contribution to UN reform.

## 1.4 Organization of the Report

The report is organized as follows:

- **Section 1** presents the rationale for the evaluation; the scope and objectives of the review; the methodology for the evaluation; and a brief outline of the content of the report.
- **Section 2** sets the context for UN reform.
- **Section 3** provides background information on UNICEF and its role within the UN system and describes UNICEF's involvement in UN reform.
- **Section 4** examines UNICEF's contributions to UN reform in terms of the development of administrative structures and processes; inter-agency interactions and headquarters policy issues as well as efforts to mainstream them within the organization.
- **Section 5** examines the impact of UN reform on UNICEF at the country level and covers topics such as the guidance and support provided to field offices; UNICEF's role and contribution to the Resident Coordinator system; its involvement in poverty reduction strategies; its contributions to country level UN programming; and an overall assessment of the impact of UN reform on UNICEF's mandate.
- **Section 6** presents the evaluation team's conclusions and recommendations for future action.



## 2. SETTING THE CONTEXT: UN REFORM

This section provides a brief overview of the UN Reform process.

### 2.1 BACKGROUND TO UN REFORM

As mentioned previously, the first comprehensive attempt to reform and harmonize the operational activities of the UN occurred in 1997. At the headquarters level, there were three major management developments:

- A UN system Chief Executives Board was established. Twice annually, the head of all UN agencies meet with the Secretary General to review UN reform initiatives and assess achievements;
- A Senior Management Group (SMG) was created comprising the heads of the four executive committee agencies (ExCom) UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP. This “inner cabinet” meets regularly; and,
- Four cross-departmental executive committees were created to oversee the four main areas of policy: peace and security; economic and social affairs; humanitarian affairs; and development.<sup>3</sup>

The objective was to increase the level of interaction among the agencies. This was meant to help the UN agencies pursue common country programming processes and to put greater emphasis on goal-oriented collaboration and programmatic coherence. To increase the coherence of UN programming at the country level, UN programmes of assistance were to be unified as much as possible through a single United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) with common objectives and timeframe.

The need for common UN Country premises and services was identified and the position of the Resident Coordinator, as the designated representative of the Secretary-General and “leader” of the UN Country Team was strengthened. There was also a commitment to expand dialogue and collaboration with the World Bank and other international financial institutions (IFIs).

In September 2000, the Millennium Summit of world leaders produced a declaration<sup>4</sup> with an ambitious agenda for reducing poverty and substantially improving the lives of people in developing countries. Drawing on previous summits and declarations, it laid out eight goals (MDGs) with specific targets to reach by 2015. These goals have now become a key frame of reference for operational activities, and have given new impetus to the need for more a more coherent UN presence at country level.

The pace of change accelerated dramatically in 2001 with the **Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) of operational activities for development**.<sup>5</sup> The report articulated clearly for the UN system that reform was not an end in itself, but a means for “achieving the goals agreed upon in the Millennium Declaration”. This report reviewed progress against the reform agenda laid out in 1997.

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<sup>3</sup> Secretary General, Report of the Secretary General, Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change, UN A/57/387, September, 2002, p.7

<sup>4</sup> Millennium Declaration

<sup>5</sup> Secretary General, Report of the Secretary General, Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the UN System, UN General Assembly, A/56/320, 2001.3

The **Agenda for Change (2002)** emphasized two main action points. The first was strengthening of human rights related action (Section 2), and the second (Section 14), improving field level coordination.

The Agenda states that the promotion and protection of human rights is “a bedrock requirement for the realization of the Charter’s vision”<sup>6</sup>. The Agenda also made a number of recommendations with respect to enhancing collaboration at the country level and called for joint programming.

## **2.2 Management Structure for UN Reform**

The structure has evolved since 1997, but the main components such as the undg, the programme and management groups have remained constant.<sup>7</sup> These are described briefly below.

### ***10. United Nations Development Group***

The United Nations Development Group (undg) provides the overall management structure for UN reform related to development cooperation and field coordination. The undg develops policies and procedures that allow member agencies to work together and analyze country issues, plan support strategies, implement support programmes, monitor results and advocate for change. The full membership has grown to 25, plus five observers. The group meets at least three times yearly to decide on issues related to country level coordination to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

### ***11. Executive Committee of undg***

This committee consists of the four funds and programmes that report directly to the Secretary General: UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP and undp. The High Commissioner for Human Rights is an ex-officio member of the Committee. The Executive Committee focuses on reforming the work methods of the funds and programmes and managing the mechanisms of the undg. It meets every other month and the undp Administrator chairs the meetings.

### ***12. UN Development Group Office (undgo)***

This group was established in 1997 as a secretariat to support the work of the undg. It prepares policies and guidelines for decision by undg and its Executive Committee. This administrative unit also supports the Resident Coordinator system that is established in 134 countries. This includes the process for selection of the Resident Coordinator (RC); and the process for the allocation and monitoring of Resident Coordinator Support Funds. It also provides general oversight to UN country teams. undp manages and funds the undgo. Senior staff are also seconded from the Executive Committee agencies. Work related to development cooperation and field level coordination is tasked to working groups under a Programme Group and a Management Group established in 2001. These groups are tailored yearly to reflect undg priorities.

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<sup>6</sup> Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change: Report of the Secretary General, UN A/57/387, 09, September 2002

<sup>7</sup> undg website, [www.undgo.org](http://www.undgo.org), April 06, 2004

### ***13. Programme Group***

The Programme Group develops policies, guidelines and procedures to improve the quality and effectiveness of programme collaboration by UN Country Teams to support national efforts to implement the Millennium Declaration and related goals. At present it oversees the work of seven working and sub-working groups including:

- Working Group on DevInfo – a geographic information system to manage and track statistical data to help monitor the MDGs at country level;
- Working Group on Communication Strategy;
- Working Group examining UNCT engagement in the PRSP process;
- Working Group on CCA-UNDAF guidelines and a standing committee for Quality Support and Assurance; and
- An adhoc group on guidelines for MDG reporting.

### ***14. Management Group***

The management group focuses on improving the efficiency of the Resident Coordinator system. It also addresses issues of common premises and services, including UN houses. The Management Group, chaired by UNICEF, oversees the work of the seven UNDG working groups addressing management and operations of UN system programmes in development as follows:

- Working Group on Common Premises and Services;
- Working Group on Financial Policies;
- Working Group on Joint Office;
- Working Group on Personnel Policies;
- Working Group on Resident Coordinator issues;
- Working Group on Training; and
- Working Group on Information Communications Technology.

### ***15. Joint Programme and Management (PG/MG) for simplification and harmonization (S&H) of programme procedures***

This group reports to both the programme group and the management group. It oversees an S&H task force with seven (7) sub-groups. These have been responsible for developing a harmonized country programme process with tools that cover preparation, approval, execution, financing, monitoring and evaluation. A final group, the Simplification and Harmonization team is responsible for rolling-out the country programme processes to the regional and country level.

Organigrams for the programme and management groups are presented in **Annex D**.



### 3. UNICEF'S ROLE IN UN REFORM

This section will review the role UNICEF has played in the reform of the UN system at the headquarters level. It includes the following:

- A brief overview of UNICEF's position within the UN system and its interactions with other agencies;
- A description of UNICEF's involvement with UN reform; and
- The impact this has had at the headquarters level.

#### 3.1 UNICEF and the UN System

UNICEF has a complex relationship with the rest of the UN system. The reasons for this complexity lie in UNICEF's origins and vision of itself as the headquarters voice for children. UNICEF is one of a group of sister service agencies put in place in the aftermath of World War II with the mandate to respond to the needs of war-affected children in Europe. Its mission expanded gradually to address the survival, growth, development and protection needs of all children globally, with particular emphasis in the developing world.

During this time, UNICEF emerged as a headquarters opinion leader and communicator for promoting the interests of children, which culminated in a groundbreaking World Summit for Children in 1990. It holds as a foundation for its work the Convention of the Rights of the Child<sup>8</sup>, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989. The World Summit for Children became a model for other UN agencies for securing headquarters political commitment to human development aims, most notably, the Millennium Summit in 2000, which catalyzed headquarters political opinion to recognize eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In the past decade:

- UNICEF began a challenging process of positioning itself as an agency promoting children's rights;
- UNICEF began to broaden its programmatic and advocacy efforts beyond infants and young children to encompass adolescents, and this coincided with the emergence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic which had a dramatic impact;
- UNICEF experienced increasing revenues, which passed \$1 billion in 1999, and were projected to exceed \$1.4 billion in 2003<sup>9</sup>; and,
- UNICEF emergency and humanitarian assistance has begun to account for an increasing proportion of UNICEF revenue, reflecting a shift towards headquarters instability, and a rise in intra-country political, ethnic and racial conflict.

UNICEF has therefore developed strengths:

- As a rights advocate;
- As an organization serving children as well as young people;
- As an organization with significant resources and a correspondingly high level of country-level capacity; and,
- As both a development and an emergency response organization.

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<sup>8</sup> Convention of the Rights of the Child, United Nations General Assembly Resolution 44/25, 20 November 1989

<sup>9</sup> UNICEF Annual Report 2003, UNICEF, 2003.

### 3.1.1 Sources of Revenue

UNICEF is entirely funded by voluntary contributions. While most of the funds come from governments, UNICEF also receives considerable help from the private sector, and from some 6 million individuals who support its work through the efforts of the National Committees for UNICEF.

It is important to note that UNICEF has **an important source of external revenues** through the UNICEF National Committees, mainly in the OECD countries. The National Committees (NatComs) carry out fundraising and advocacy initiatives in 37 countries with their respective national constituencies, particularly the public, major donors in the private sector and with governments. The NatComs account for one of every three dollars of revenue received each year. A number of senior UNICEF interviewees noted that this NatCom asset is a significant organizational characteristic distinguishing UNICEF from other UN agencies. Businesses also contribute funds or in-kind support to many aspects of UNICEF's work.

In 2003, contribution to UNICEF by source (in US dollars) totalled \$1,688 million. Sixty-seven percent (\$1,136 million) were from governments/intergovernmental organizations; 31 percent (\$515 million) came from non-governmental/private sector organizations (includes contributions from UN agencies); and 2 percent (\$37 million) came from other sources.

### 3.1.2 Vision and Values

In 1996, the UNICEF Executive Board adopted a mission statement for the organization<sup>10</sup> containing 9 key actions, the mission statement emphasizes UNICEF's mandate to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand opportunities to reach their full potential. It established the Convention of the Rights of the Child as the core guide for the organization and for mobilizing political will and resources for the benefit of children and their families.

Recognizing the need to better communicate its vision and values amid an increasingly competitive market for funding from major donors and partners, UNICEF completed a branding exercise in 2003. The branding exercise was an opportunity to better engage the public in the UNICEF mission.

The brand book sets out UNICEF's vision and core values. "These values are what distinguish our organization from others. They typify the way we work. Our values embody the qualities and strengths that our various stakeholders attribute to UNICEF — the qualities and strengths that lead them to believe in us and in what we do"<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> The mission of UNICEF, UNICEF Executive Board, E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.2

<sup>11</sup> UNICEF Brand Book 2003.

**Exhibit 1** summarizes UNICEF’s vision and values.

<b>Exhibit 1 - UNICEF’s Vision and Values</b>	
<b>UNICEF’s Vision</b>	<b>UNICEF’s Values</b>
To be the driving force that helps build a world where the rights of every child are realized.	Passionate and principled Influential and visionary Innovative and credible Headquarters and authoritative An agency that “gets things done”

**Source:** UNICEF Brand Book, 2003

UNICEF always works with partners including governments, NGOs, community groups and sister UN agencies, but it also sees itself as a competitor “not only for financial resources but for the public’s attention and trust” and must position itself as “an indispensable headquarters organization, acting with and on behalf of children.”

### **3.1.3 Inter-Agency Dynamics**

UNICEF’s distinguishing characteristics and recent efforts to encompass these in a brand with a vision and values have contributed to its relationships with other UN agencies. Other organizations, particularly the ExCom agencies, indicated in interviews, both positive as well as negative perceptions of UNICEF - positive because of its professionalism and “esprit de corps”, but negative because of its intolerance of other agency practices.

UNICEF believes that the organization is part of the UN system but also wishes to maintain its distinctive values and vision.

#### ***Involvement with Specialized Agencies***

UNICEF’s Country Office Annual Reports (COARs) indicate high levels of program and project specific collaborations with the specialized and technical agencies, particularly the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). However, these collaborations are not generally within the broader context of UN reform efforts but rather on a programme or project level basis.

Interviews at headquarters level suggest that UNICEF has had some difficulties in establishing relationships with the specialized technical UN agencies. External informants commented on how the organization “displays very low tolerance and patience with agencies outside the ExCom.” They felt that UNICEF appeared to be exclusive rather than inclusive of the specialized and technical agencies. There were differences on this point between the internal and external respondents. UNICEF staff felt that extra efforts were made to include the specialized agencies in the task forces and working groups, and that any exclusion had more to do with the governance mechanisms of the UN specialized agencies.

The specialized and technical agencies do have different governance mechanisms from those of the ExCom agencies that report directly to the Secretary General. UNICEF interviewees

noted that the ExComs are often torn by the need to be inclusive of specialized and technical agencies, while also recognizing that their involvement in UN reform matters and the adoption of new programming tools and processes agreed to by the ExCom agencies is very much discretionary.

On the other hand, respondents felt that “UNICEF gains if UNESCO, WHO and the FAO are more solid – providing it with a chance to sharpen its focus” and that “operationally, UNICEF is just coming to grips with the implications of a stronger system” and is slowly moving towards more strategic relations with other agencies.

### ***Cooperation with International Financial Institutions***

UNICEF reports a well-established record of collaboration with the World Bank in areas such as policy dialogue, joint technical support, and development of programme guidelines. The Executive Director’s annual report to the Economic and Social Council in 2004 provides evidence of the growing collaboration<sup>12</sup>. Other recent examples include the development of:

- Watching Briefs for the health, education, water, and social protection sectors in Iraq;
- A “marginal budgeting for bottleneck tool” which identifies constraints with implementation in the health care sector (carried out with WHO); and
- Joint Guidelines for the care of small children affected by HIV/AIDS.<sup>13</sup>

An analysis of 38 COARs for the years 2002 and 2003 indicated that nineteen (19) countries reported some or substantial involvement in PRSP processes, SWAPs or SIPs. In many countries, UNICEF officers perceived that poverty reduction strategies were too strongly oriented to economic growth issues with insufficient attention to social safety nets. It would appear that UNICEF’s ability to engage with international financial institutions has so far neither been enhanced or hindered by UN Reform.

In all five countries, where PRSP processes are underway, the UNICEF COs mentioned varying levels of involvement by the UNCT, and use of the UN system approach as a platform for advocacy. These offices take an opportunistic approach using their specialized areas of knowledge to influence the direction of the PRSP process.

## **3.2 UNICEF’s Involvement in UN Reform**

This section provides an overview of UNICEF involvement in the UN Reform process over time.

Before describing the history of UNICEF involvement, it is generally believed by many that UNICEF agreed to participate in UN reform, with the tacit understanding that certain basic principles, or “non-negotiables”, were adhered to throughout the process. These were:

- UNICEF’s independent country level representation which allows the organization to act as an effective advocate for children;
- UNICEF’s right to have a distinct country programme process which would build on the organization’s institutional experience in country programming processes and would also ensure that children remain a clear focus of UNICEF’s activities; and
- UNICEF’s right to independent fundraising, primarily through its National Committees.

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<sup>12</sup> Report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: Annual Report to the Economic and Social Council, UNICEF, Economic and Social Council, E/ICEF/2004/4

### **3.2.1 Phase 1 (1997-1999)**

In 1996, there was heavy pressure from the United States to demonstrate a tangible strategy and plan for UN reform. There was a strong message that major changes in agency structures and mandates were on the horizon for UN service agencies, particularly the funds and programmes.

To meet the objectives of the 1997 UN reform plan, it was necessary to increase coordination, and to create interagency structures and processes for systematic collaboration.

Three important inter-agency initiatives took place during this period. In 1998, an external and internal assessment of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) was completed. A workshop held in November 1998 discussed the results of these assessments, and led to a commitment to new guidelines for the Common Country Assessment (CCA), revised UNDAF guidelines and the harmonization of programme cycles among the ExCom agencies.

In 1997, 18 pilot countries made the first substantive efforts to develop both CCAs and UNDAFs. An additional “roll-out” of 18 countries followed in 1999. During this period, UNICEF contributed to the UN reform process through chairing and leading working groups, assisting in the development of UNDG guidance, particularly for the CCA and UNDAF, and in the institutionalization of reform efforts and training.

UNICEF staff participated in UN reform deliberations through various mechanisms including the establishment of a senior level steering committee, and the assignment of key UNICEF staff to participate in inter-agency and UN reform processes.

UNICEF held two internal workshops in 1997 and 1998. The first was a 3-day retreat in December 1997 concerning the CCA/UNDAF and the Resident Coordinator system. The second workshop from August 30-September 1, 1998 was to review UNICEF experience in the pilot phase. Out of these workshops emerged a number of key UNICEF concerns: (1) the need for better integration of UNICEF country programmes with UNDAF and improved quality of programming and programmes by harmonizing cycles and (2) the need for greater operational coordination through harmonization of programme implementation modalities.

### **3.2.2 Phase 2 (2000-2001)**

During this period, UNICEF began to embrace UN reform, recognizing its importance both for the United Nations and for UNICEF itself as an organization. UNICEF also saw opportunities to influence the system.

The years 2000 and 2001 saw a number of events with important repercussions for reform efforts. The Millennium Summit, which occurred in September of 2000, provided a set of common human development goals for member states as well as UN agencies for protecting the rights of vulnerable groups, including children, and protecting human rights.

Two external assessments<sup>14</sup> of the CCA and UNDAF pilot experiences were conducted: the Nordic Assessment, and a second External Assessment. The findings of these studies fed into the 2001 Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR), which made strong recommendations to accelerate reform. In response, the Secretary General laid out a road map for achieving the Millennium Declaration and the associated MDGs and there was a first joint meeting of the Executive Boards for ExCom agencies.

In 2001, inter-agency Programme and Management Groups were established and a results-based work planning system adopted. Guidance notes were developed and circulated with respect to the UN system support to the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) process and to enhance collaboration with the Bretton Woods Institutions.

In 2001, the competency assessment system for Resident Coordinators was re-designed to better reflect the collaboration and teamwork needs of the position, and an expanded concept of common services introduced.

Another important event in 2001 was a second inter-agency workshop convened to assess the results of the external CCA-UNDAF reviews mentioned above. Fifty-seven (57) additional countries began the roll-out process to prepare CCAs and UNDAFs and to prepare their Country Programmes using a harmonized cycle. Training and support efforts intensified with two training sessions for CCA-UNDAF facilitators and resource persons to support the efforts of rollout countries.

UNICEF lead the UNDG group on programme policy during these two critical years, and in 2000, the UNICEF Executive Director reported to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) that there had been *“a revision of programme preparation guidelines to reflect linkages between the UNICEF situation analysis and the CCA/UNDAF process.”*

UNICEF’s Medium-Term Strategic Plan was approved in 2001.<sup>15</sup>

Overall, this period demonstrated strong UNICEF effort to embrace reform<sup>16</sup>. Interviews indicated that concerns about the scope of reforms were still present, but these were mitigated somewhat by the introduction of inter-agency structures and procedures such as the Programme Group and the Management Group, which enabled the UN agencies, particularly the ExComs to begin to shape the mechanics of reform. In this context, interviewees indicated that UNICEF adopted and began to use a “value-added” criterion for deciding which elements of reform to pursue. The designation of the FSIAS section as the agency focal point for reform deliberations combined inter-agency collaboration with a field support function. COARs and respondents have highlighted UNICEF’s comparative advantages in the analysis of national situations and the development of programmes.

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<sup>14</sup> Laying the Keystone of UN Development Reform: The CCA/UNDAF Experience, Joint Nordic Assessment of CCA/UNDAF Process COWI, October 2001; 2001 External Assessment of the UNDAF, Professor Adebayo Adedejii, Ms Mary McCowan, Ms Devaki Jain, 7 March 2001

<sup>15</sup> Medium-term strategic plan for the period 2002-2005, UNICEF, E/CEF/2001/13, 7 November 2001

<sup>16</sup> See, for instance, the memo from the Executive Director (CF/EXD/MEM/2001)

### **3.2.3 Phase 3 (2002-2004)**

Since 2002, UN reform has continued to accelerate. In 2002, the Secretary General launched the second stage of reform with the Agenda for Change report, emphasizing a focus on human rights related action at country level (Action 2) and greater field level coordination among UN agencies (Action 14).

To respond to Action 14 and to the TCPR of 2001, which demanded full simplification and harmonization (S&H) of agency programme procedures by 2004, an inter-agency Simplification and Harmonization (S&H) task force was established. Senior UNICEF staff was involved in this task force. Following deliberations among the four ExCom agencies, guidance was prepared for each of the elements of a harmonized country programming process. New, integrated CCA-UNDAF guidelines were issued in 2002. These were further revised to reflect the harmonized country programme process.

However, greater difficulty has emerged in agreeing on joint programming and resource transfer modalities (RTM) -- a common basis for transferring funds to national governments and to partners. Guidance for joint programming was issued in early 2004 and guidance for RTM is under negotiation and will be released at the end of 2004.

UNICEF led the efforts to establish a quality support and assurance (QSA) system to respond to the concerns raised in the TCPR of 2001 with respect to the variable quality of CCAs and UNDAFs. A QSA system linking UN country teams to regional readers groups was established and appropriate guidelines and checklists developed as well. A lead agency concept was also adopted, which entailed appointing one of the ExCom agencies the coordinator for the QSA system in each of the regions. The system has been active since mid 2003<sup>17</sup>.

An inter-agency workshop on the human rights based approach (HRBA) convened in 2003 to develop an approach to deal with Action 2 (strengthening human rights at the country level). This resulted in a consensus document among UN agencies concerning the terminology and use of a rights-based approach to UN development cooperation. Subsequently a Plan of Action and Implementation Plan were developed.

Another 16 countries began preparing CCAs and UNDAFs in the context of the harmonized country programme process (referred to as the second generation of CCA-UNDAF rollouts) during this period.

In 2002, a United Nations General Assembly Special Session for Children (UNGASS) resulted in a declaration of a "World Fit for Children". This event secured a commitment from world leaders with respect to the priorities of children. UNICEF was conscious of the need to link the UNGASS to the Millennium Declaration and Goals.

The Executive Director's report to the Executive Board in 2002 emphasized the congruence between the MDGs, the goal of the WFFC, and UNICEF's programme priorities from the MTSP.

In 2002, UNICEF began to harmonize its country programme process with those of UNDP and UNFPA. Programme guidelines were updated with a greater emphasis placed on the CCA and UNDAF. Numerous Executive Directives (ExDirs) were issued in this period that explicitly

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<sup>17</sup> Report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: Annual Report to the Economic and Social Council, UNICEF, Economic and Social Council, E/ICEF/2004/4, p9

addressed UNICEF policy in the context of UN reform<sup>18</sup>. UNICEF interviewees indicated that within UNICEF, there appeared to be a growing sense of confidence and ownership of the processes and results of UN reform. UNICEF's role in both the Simplification and Harmonization (S&H) and the QSA task forces contributed to bringing the conceptualization of UN reform to a more practical level. The task forces also succeeded in building greater trust and rapport between the ExCom agencies.

According to UNICEF staff, corroborated by external interviewees, at field level, UNICEF country offices in the sixteen (16) second generation rollout countries demonstrated growing institutional commitment to the reform process and to inter-agency collaboration. UNICEF Representatives and their country teams were increasingly called-upon to lead the CCA-UNDAF processes by Resident Coordinators<sup>19</sup>.

A key concern however for all levels of UNICEF during this time was the workload demands of the harmonized country programme process. This was expressed in the Executive Director's annual report in 2003, which states that *"meaningful participation in the full range of UNDG meetings has become a significant organizational overhead"*<sup>20</sup>.

### **3.2.4 Future Challenges**

The Greentree report from a retreat of the ExCom agency heads in January of 2004 provides a glimpse of challenges to come:

- Improving the alignment of the country programme process with national processes to ensure that UN funds and programmes work towards building national capacity and ownership of a "MDG-based PRSP";
- Strengthening the resident coordinator system where it was agreed "a shortage of candidates with the right mix of qualifications has emerged". There is also agreement to strengthen the position with greater formal authority over the development and monitoring of UN results expected at country level;
- Promoting greater coherence at country level including moving forward with a joint office concept and accelerating the drive for common premises and services; and
- Recognition of the need for more effective communication to the field level about the aims of UN reform.

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<sup>18</sup> For example, see UNICEF and MDGs (027), Pooled Funds (015), and Country Programming and the CCA-UNDAF (003).

<sup>19</sup> Report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: Annual Report to the Economic and Social Council, UNICEF, Economic and Social Council, E/ICEF/2004/4, p7.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p3.

## 4. UNICEF'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO MAINSTREAMING UN REFORM

This section first provides a summary of UNICEF's human resource contributions to reform efforts with an emphasis on seconded staff. This includes a summary of the staff that UNICEF has seconded to the wider system in support of reform efforts and its contributions to UNDG working and task groups. UNICEF's contributions to mainstreaming UN Reform is then assessed – including changes to its administrative processes; the issue of common premises and shared services; the resident coordinator system and contributions to program priorities.

### 4.1 Human Resources

There was agreement among both internal and external informants that one of the most significant, ongoing contributions of UNICEF to reform efforts has been its staff. As of April 2004, 36 UNICEF staff were seconded to the UN system. Of these, approximately 10 staff members are serving at senior levels with inter-agency and UN reform responsibilities. Some of these postings include: Assistant Secretary General in the UN Office of Human Resources, Director, Associate Director and a senior post responsible for Transitional Situations at the United Nations Development Group Office (UNDGO), the Executive Director of United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Director with the Department of Public Information, and a Director with the UN Secretariat. In addition three UNICEF staff are serving in Director level posts with UNAIDS.

Interviews with representatives of the Division of Human resources indicated that there is a strong normative and administrative link between UNICEF and the wider UN system on matters of personnel policies. UNICEF respondents indicated their substantial involvement in a number of HR policy initiatives, e.g. the development of the inter-agency (IA) mobility system<sup>21</sup>; development of an employment policy for expatriate spouses; and promoting a management culture based on competency and leadership. UNICEF respondents indicated that all agencies had contributed equally to this effort.

### 4.2 Inter-Agency Working Groups

Since the comprehensive reform process began in 1997, a number of working and task groups were established to take on the work. **Annex E** provides a more detailed list of the working groups that functioned by year and indicates where UNICEF staff served as chair or vice-chair<sup>22</sup>. The summary below reflects the current structure, with an emphasis on UNICEF's involvement.

UNICEF has made significant efforts to chair and participate in inter-agency working groups, including the following:

- The **Programme Group (PG)** has been chaired or vice-chaired by UNICEF continuously since August of 2002. UNICEF staff is currently serving on all seven working groups under the Programme Group, and a UNICEF staff person is serving as chair for the Communication Strategy working group and the Standing Committee on Quality Support

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<sup>21</sup> Over 1,000 UN staff have accessed the IA joint website that was established to advertise internal vacancies across the UN system. Despite this achievement, it was implied that the commitment of other agencies to the IA system may be lacking. UNICEF posts tend to represent about 80 percent of the total jobs listed.

<sup>22</sup> This Annex is provided courtesy of the FSIAS unit at UNICEF headquarters.

and Assurance (QSA). UNICEF has chaired the QSA group continuously since August of 2002.

- UNICEF staff serves on the S&H task force of the **Joint Programme Working Group (Joint PG/MG) on Simplification and Harmonization**, on each of the seven (7) working groups, and on the S&H rollout team. UNICEF staff has chaired both the S&H Roll-out team as well as the working group on Resource Transfer Modalities since the inception of these groups. UNICEF also established an internal reference group at headquarters and in the field to ensure adequate consultation and early acceptance of S&H recommendations<sup>23</sup>.
- UNICEF has served as chair of the **Management Group (MG)** since 2003. There are seven working groups under the MG, and UNICEF staff has served in all groups and as chair of the **Working Group on Training**. Since 2001, much of the work of this group has fallen to the UNICEF chair, as the learning manager positions in UNDP and UNFPA were vacant from 2001 to mid 2003. Because of the staff vacancies in these organizations, UNICEF respondents indicated that the working group approved UNDG training approaches and tools with only limited consultation from partner organizations. This working group was disbanded and there is a proposal to replace it with a more strategic review committee. This committee would meet regularly to provide technical oversight and consultation for all training tools meant for the inter-agency environment.
- UNICEF chaired the **UNDG Working Group on Common Premises and Services** for six years. This group was established to develop methods to expedite the promotion of UN houses.

Excluding the Executive Director who serves on three inter-agency management groups, approximately 30 UNICEF staff are intensively involved in 29 UNDG working and task groups. UNICEF thus was able to maintain a high level of continuity, efficiency and focus while engaged in inter-agency working groups.

### **4.3 Mainstreaming Efforts**

This section will highlight the key efforts made by UNICEF to develop processes supporting the mainstreaming of UN reform.

#### **4.3.1 Headquarters Direction and Communication**

UNICEF uses a range of directives to communicate important messages and policies to headquarter, regional and country levels. The most common vehicle for communicating messages about UN reform is **Executive Directives (ExDirs)**. **Exhibit 2** on the following page highlights some of the key ones.

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<sup>23</sup> Report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: Annual Report to the Economic and Social Council, UNICEF, Economic and Social Council, E/ICEF/2004/4, p11.

## Exhibit 2 – UNICEF Executive Directives

- **UNICEF’s Unique Strength in achieving the MDGs (EXD 2002—0270):** a statement about UNICEF’s commitment towards achieving the MDGs, providing a detailed chart linking the MDGs to UNICEF’s MTSP and to the WFFC.
- **Pooled Funds and other Funding Mechanisms (EXD 2002-015):** a discussion on the need for financial arrangements for joint programmes and projects with UNICEF’s sister agencies and identifying ways to position UNICEF strategically to get the most benefit for children from these joint arrangements.
- **Changes to the Country Programming Process and Implications for UNICEF Offices (EXD 2002-003):** advises UNICEF divisions, regional and country offices about the full integration of the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in country programming, with changes to streamline the process.
- **Implementation of the Medium-Term Strategic Plan (2002-2005) (EXD 2002-002):** this directive describes UNICEF’s current five programme priorities. These priorities define UNICEF’s role and its contribution to the broader international agenda of the Millennium Development Goals and the World Fit for Children. It urges UNICEF offices to implement the MTSP “in a fashion consistent with the on-going UN-wide reforms”, especially the CCA and UNDAF.
- **Accountability for UNDAF and CCA Processes (EXD Memorandum):** A memo from the Executive Director to all Representatives and Assistant Representatives in January of 2001 instructing all field staff to include in their personal work plans their accountability for the quality and timeliness of the Common Country Assessments (CCA) and the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).
- **United Nations Resident Coordinators (EXD 2000-008):** states UNICEF’s commitment to a more effective and efficient Resident Coordinator System and states its desire to expand the number of UNICEF candidates in the pool of candidates for the resident coordinator system.
- **The Focus of UNICEF’s Work Beyond 2000 (EXD 1999-002):** reports on an internal consultation by UNICEF to fashion a headquarters agenda for children for the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In a section “Meeting the Challenges Ahead”, UNICEF notes the need to work closely with other agencies, within the UNDAF, to “make it possible for UNICEF, in the context of UN reform, to shape rights-based programmes of cooperation at country level.”
- **Coordination of UN Reform in Headquarters (EXD 1997-001):** lays out the internal coordination mechanisms for efforts to broaden the exposure and input of management and staff to reform efforts.
- **UN Reform (EXD 1997-001):** one of the first directives on UN Reform, it explains the responsibilities of senior staff engaged in consultations with the Secretary-General’s staff and other agencies.

**UNDG Joint Letters and Guidance Notes** signed by the heads of the ExCom agencies of the UNDG are another inter-agency vehicle for communicating developments in UN reform. UNICEF interviewees reported that UNICEF participates actively in the development of these joint letters and that they are widely distributed to staff at all levels. Key joint letters have dealt with the following topics: strengthening the UN system response to HIV/AIDS at country level; country level reporting on the MDGs; and guidance for UN Country Team involvement in the poverty reduction strategy processes.

In contrast to perceptions at Headquarters, the vast majority of the country offices (14 of 16 reporting) indicated that formal communications from UNICEF Headquarters have been clear

and direct and that the issues were well reflected in discussions and presentation but that less attention had been given to obtain feedback from the country offices.

Country offices generally noted that commitment to UN reform, in principle, is emphasized within both UNICEF country and regional level discussions. Country offices are urged to actively participate, and in some cases lead, the CCA/UNDAF process. There have been sessions on CCA/UNDAF at all RMTs for the past two years, often with the participation of relevant, senior colleagues from NYHQ.

There were some concerns however with respect to communications related to the strategic direction of UN Reform, or UNICEF's own long-term direction and that there were still issues of accountabilities, programme delivery and many other operational issues. The lack of information on clear milestones and road maps for the future dilutes the possibility of identifying a clear direction and chronology for future reforms.

Similar concerns were raised during the internal and external interviews held in New York. Interviews in New York also emphasized the fact that communications within UNICEF have been through formal means such as ExDirs, or through the various fora and meetings. There is no ongoing information resource available on the intranet to update staff on progress in UN reform or forthcoming plans and intentions through bulletin boards and/or UNICEF wide newsletters. The Field Services and Inter Agency Support (FSIAS) section has taken it upon itself to publish an occasional newsletter outlining activities and progress in UN reform.

Some country offices also indicated that:

- There have been problems at the country level in terms of timely receipt of some of the new/amended guidelines. This frequent change/amendment in guidelines has created some extra work and confusion, as staff has often started some tasks as per the previous guidelines. Others indicated that the Guidelines on CCA/UNDAF keep changing, resulting in UNICEF not being in harmony.
- A few offices were concerned about "the confusing mass of information" sent out from UNDGO about UN Reform and which is not necessarily complemented by UNICEF Administrative or Executive Directives. They wanted to receive the information about the reform through UNICEF's official channels rather than from UNDGO to ensure there is conformity in instructions received. They also wanted more opportunities to provide feedback.
- One office reported that the process and the final documents do not really provide the framework for the coordinated and joint actions that are required. They were more an identification of areas where UN agencies could do more together *over and above existing agency programmes* rather than an investigation as to how existing resources and capacities could be better used to address critical issues from a human development perspective.
- Another office reported that the RBM guidelines need to be simplified, as they are difficult for staff to fully understand and appreciate. They suggested that there be better linkages between the guidelines and practical examples for local and international staff to understand and use them.

- For countries where English is not the working language, concerns were expressed about the fact that the documentation was fairly dense and only in English. This limits their ability for it to be useful, understood and internalized throughout the country offices.
- One country indicated a need for more, simple communication on UNICEF's position on different issues related to UN reform and the need to address certain areas that still create confusion or are unclear. These include:
  - Guidelines on how to manage joint funding;
  - Greater guidance is required on joint planning and programming with an area-based approach;
  - The final version of DevInfo to support the Government to monitor the MDGs; and
  - A note indicating staff in NY and Geneva Headquarters responsible for different aspects of UN reform and ensuring they have access to field experience so that their advice and feedback is grounded in reality.

A number of country offices also noted that, compared to other UN Agencies, UNICEF has been far more timely in the release of guidelines and in making support mechanisms available. UNICEF has integrated, more than other agencies, the CCA-UNDAF process into its programme and procedures manual.

In summary, Headquarters communication and guidance are considered good in general. However there are areas that need strengthening. These include providing a continuing source of information on UNICEF's strategic intent on UN reform. A few offices would prefer receiving information on UN reform from UNICEF directly as opposed to receiving information from both UNDG as well as UNICEF.

An ongoing internal bulletin board or intranet website covering progress and plans would be useful. Finally, there are a number of areas cited by country offices where additional clarification is needed on the guidelines.

#### **4.3.2 Guidance Material for Country Programming**

The primary guidance material for country programming is the Programme Policy and Procedure Manual.<sup>24</sup> This manual, updated regularly, is available as a reference tool on UNICEF's intranet. It has hyperlinks to important organizational directives, and background materials. The document highlights changes arising from UN reform. Interviews with UNICEF staff indicated that policies and procedures have been fully updated to reflect the harmonized country programme planning process and that "there are no inconsistencies between the CCA-UNDAF guidelines, the draft guidance for the CP tools and UNICEF's programme guidance." The challenge remains for both UNICEF and other ExCom agencies to ensure that these new CP processes reach the regional and country level quickly.

The Simplification and Harmonization (S&H) task force was responsible for simplifying and harmonizing the programme procedures of the four ExCom agencies by 2004. These efforts linked with those of other development partners, especially the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD. Extensive consultations were held with 10 reference UN Country teams and partner governments and specialized agencies. A workshop involving Government and UN experts from Bolivia, Tanzania, Cambodia, the Philippines and Mozambique was held in

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<sup>24</sup> Programme Policy and Procedure Manual, UNICEF, May 2003.

Nairobi. The ExCom heads at the end of 2002 accepted these recommendations and the finalization of the programming methodologies were carried out by the Task Force. In 2003, the harmonized country programme process was integrated into the overall CCA-UNDAF guidelines. **Exhibit 3** below provides a brief overview of this process.

### **Exhibit 3 – Harmonized Country Programme Process**

The process begins with a joint assessment and analysis of the country situation. This may culminate in a **Common Country Assessment (CCA)**. A few strategic and collective priorities for the UN system are then identified in the **United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)**. These priorities are expressed as results or UNDAF outcomes in the Results Matrix. In order to track actual performance against the UNDAF results, there is an **M&E Plan**. The UN country team and its partners on an ongoing basis as country programmes update the matrix and the M&E plan and projects are developed. For the Executive Committee agencies - UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA & WFP this is done by preparing **Country Programme Documents (CPDs)**, **Country Programme Action Plans (CPAPs)**, and **Annual Work Plans (AWPs)**. Specialized and technical agencies continue to use their existing programme and project documents. During implementation, the UN programmes, Funds, and Specialized Agencies work together with national partners to achieve the results laid out in the UNDAF and results matrix. Where effectiveness and efficiency gains are clear, agencies may coordinate their efforts to achieve common results with common partners by having **joint programmes or projects**. Resources may also be combined to enhance the process and results. For all UN supported programmes and projects, the agreed resource transfer modalities dictate how UN resources are transferred to partners or among agencies involved. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting also must take place.

UNICEF exerted influence on the design, guidance, communication and roll-out of inter-agency programming tools and processes. As a result, much of the rigor imbedded in its own country programming, which ExCom members recognized, was transferred to the UN system. Respondents generally recognized the significant contributions made by UNICEF at headquarters to the development of the tools and processes and new guidance needed to implement UN Reform.

UNICEF respondents indicated they had tried to not deliver ready-made solutions, but rather to engage in a consultative and negotiated process to the introduction of new programming concepts. However, some external respondents considered that UNICEF had been very cautious at the beginning and was the least flexible, unwilling to admit to flaws in their own processes and to look openly at how others do things.

On the one hand, UNICEF brought a high level of intellectual rigor and energy to the deliberations from which the whole system has benefited. On the other hand, the organization's approach implied some reluctance towards collaboration, underscoring according to one external informant "the difference between leadership and control".

#### **4.3.3 CCA-UNDAF Concept and Guidelines**

There was widespread agreement that UNICEF has made a significant contribution to the development of the CCA-UNDAF guidelines, particularly with its promotion and understanding of causality analysis. UNICEF chaired the first UNDAF Guidelines Group in 1997 and UNICEF

staff served as key authors. A larger group of UNICEF staff also engaged in the next major revision to the CCA and UNDAF guidelines in 1998. In 2001, UNICEF served on a UNDG ad-hoc group to develop an action plan for improving the quality of CCA and UNDAFs, and UNICEF chaired and was intensively involved in the updates to the CCA and UNDAF guidelines in 2002 and again in 2003.

#### **4.3.4 Country Office Annual Reporting**

As early as 2001, country offices were asked to report on the nature of UNICEF's role in wider cooperation frameworks, including CCA/UNDAF, Sector Wide Approaches, Comprehensive Development Frameworks and Poverty Reduction Strategies. In both 2002 and 2003, country offices were also asked to complete a detailed questionnaire regarding UN reform and inter-agency collaboration to better understand the role that UNICEF was playing in the UN reform initiative and how these various initiatives are affecting the organization.

#### **4.3.5 Training Materials and Sessions**

The tools, processes and mechanisms developed to support UN reform efforts have been incorporated into the substantive elements of UNICEF's key organizational and training materials. Both the Senior Leaders workshop (formerly called the induction training for Representatives) and the Training for Senior Programme Officers and Operations Officers (SPOOS) were updated to reflect the UN reform terminology and the harmonized country programme planning processes. UNICEF's Programme Policy and Procedures training course was also fully revised and is a central fixture of UN efforts to ensure high quality in UNICEF's country programming practices. An on-demand web-based version of the course is currently available on UNICEF's intranet for use by all staff.<sup>25</sup>

Through the Programme Planning and Procedures Manual (PPPM) changes, hundreds of staff at different levels are trained each year. Regions also develop and adapt training materials when HQ supplied material lags behind their needs.

Dissemination of information and guidelines are hampered, at times, by lack of translation of documents from English to other official UN languages. Often translation is done at the local level resulting in various versions of certain materials.

#### **4.3.6 Quality Support and Assurance (QSA)**

There was agreement among both internal and external respondents that UNICEF has made a "great intellectual contribution" to the QSA system. The successful development and operationalization of the QSA system responds to a major recommendation from the previous Joint Nordic Assessment of the CCA/UNDAF process for quality control.<sup>26</sup>

The QSA task force has evolved into a standing committee to take on headquarters QSA functions. Implementation of the QSA system has begun. The interviewees however noted a number of factors that made it more difficult for some of the regional offices of the ExCom agencies to work together effectively. These include not only regional boundaries and geography but also other factors such as differing structures, accountabilities, authority levels

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<sup>25</sup> Review of UNICEF's Intranet, 12 May 2004

<sup>26</sup> Laying the Keystone of UN Development Reform: The CCA/UNDAF Experience, COWI, October 2001.

and roles. In many cases, member states also are resistant or are quite sensitive to redrawing these boundaries.

UNICEF technical programme functions are based in the same locations as the regional leadership. This is not true for other ExCom agencies, e.g. UNDP, where technical assets or sub-regional research facilities (SURFS) are often removed from Regional Bureaus. Interviewees noted that most of the regions have managed to work around the regional mismatch to some degree, but they still pose logistical and organizational problems to full cooperation.

#### **4.3.7 ProMS**

UNICEF's Programme Manager system (ProMS) is the key computer software and programme management tool at regional and country level. It is designed to help country offices plan programmes, monitor their implementation, provide the necessary inputs and disbursements, and to report on progress.

Interviews with staff show that ProMS has fully incorporated the new terminology and formats of the harmonized UN programme process. There is an expectation that version 6 to be released in 2005, will incorporate fundamental changes to address the need for joint programmes with pooled or pass-through fund management mechanisms.

#### **4.3.8 Monitoring and Evaluation**

In 2001, the TCPR asserted that agencies have not put in place mechanisms to learn from experiences and have not shifted M&E practices away from technical or mechanical project level concerns towards more strategic concerns of country level effectiveness. Four concerns were identified:

- The need to strengthen national M&E capacity;
- The importance of adopting a programme approach;
- The need to encourage joint evaluations; and
- The need to improve the impacts of operational activities.

Responding to the TCPR, UNICEF reported<sup>27</sup> that it has intensified its support to programme countries. National ownership of M&E has been enhanced by involving national authorities in the drafting of terms of reference, the development of methodologies and indicators and the formation of evaluation teams for conducting studies. Concrete measures were taken to build the capacity of country offices and national partners, among these:

- Training workshops were held to disseminate results-based approaches to programming and evaluation;
- An integrated monitoring and evaluation plan (IMEP) for country programmes was promoted through workshops, and this tool was included as part of the UNDG's harmonized and simplified country programming process (see S&H discussion above);
- UNICEF developed an internal handbook to provide country offices and national partners a better understanding of results-based approaches to country programming; and
- A senior-level Evaluation Committee established at headquarters in 2003 advises the Executive Director on evaluation matters and provides oversight of the evaluation function.

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<sup>27</sup> Report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: Annual Report to the Economic and Social Council, UNICEF, Economic and Social Council, E/ICEF/2004/4, 12.

UNICEF has demonstrated a commitment to improving the strategic focus and country level capacity for monitoring and evaluation and contributed to the development of inter-agency tools and practices.

Both internal and external respondents agreed that UNICEF's integrated monitoring and evaluation plan (IMEP) was adopted as a model for the UNDG's M&E plan, and that UNICEF's evaluation practice and lessons-learned influenced the UNDAF final evaluation. Given the relative recentness of these tools in the context of the UN's country programme process, it is too soon to assess if they are being implemented successfully. UNICEF country offices will have to play a substantive role in supporting the development and implementation of the M&E plan and final evaluation, with additional workload implications for staff beginning a harmonized country programme cycle.

#### **4.4 Common Premises and Services**

One of the important thrusts of UN Reform has been the move to what are known as common premises and shared services. Begun in 1996, the emphasis focused on bringing together in-country UN agencies under one roof in the belief that this would facilitate increased sharing of services, reduce space requirements and would lead to economies in the use of conference and common use facilities.

Although there was a lot of reluctance initially, the move to common premises gathered some momentum and there are at present 58 UN houses in existence worldwide, with UNICEF positioned in all but 12. Interviewees within UNICEF indicated that although there was reluctance initially, UNICEF has looked seriously at joining into the UN House concept, where it makes economic sense. Certain cost factors, e.g. where UNICEF owns its own building, and/or benefits from very favourable or long term leasing agreements are factors that have deterred UNICEF.

Common or shared services have been a more complex issue for the entire UN system. In 1996, the UNDG Working Group on Common Premises and Services was established to develop methodologies and to expedite the promotion of these concepts.

In 2001, UNDG obtained support from DFID for a pilot project on common services in eight countries. The pilot project was completed and evaluated in 2003. The pilot project funded joint activities, studies and process consultations meant to support the promotion and adoption of common services. Three of the pilots were successful, while the others were not. In 2003, following on the results of the pilot projects, the UNDG working group modified its approach slightly. In addition to a focal point in UNDG for common services, two experts are to be selected and placed in West and East Africa. They will assist UNCTs in the establishment of common service arrangements.

UNICEF chaired the UNDG Working Group on Common Premises and Services for the last six years, with UNDP taking over that role this year. UNICEF provided an individual to UNDG to serve as the focal point for common services as of 2003. In addition, it was recognized that of the three countries that were successful in piloting common services through the DFID funded project, two of the Operations Management Teams were led by UNICEF Operations managers (Philippines and Zimbabwe). External observers generally believe that UNICEF was a key contributor through its role as the chair of the working group, and in the successful completion of the aforementioned two pilot projects.

The Working Group is now targeting the constraints identified by the UN Country Teams during the pilot projects and has developed an action plan to address these issues.

#### 4.5 Resident Coordinator System

The Resident Coordinator acts as overall coordinator of the UN at the country level. Currently, the Resident Coordinators are employed through UNDP, although the incumbent may come from any UN agency. The Resident Coordinators are selected through a competitive process, and are evaluated formally by UNDP Regional Directors with input from the country team. Recently provision has been made for 360-degree feedback exercises for the UNCT member representatives and for the Resident Coordinator as well. The Resident Coordinator, as the primary UN Representative in country, is also provided with an office, and a small staff as well as financial resources. The majority of Resident Coordinators (over 70%) are UNDP staff members, selected for the position.

In 2000, the UNICEF Executive Director urged UNDG to review the Competency Assessment system for UN Resident Coordinators (RCs)<sup>28</sup>. The review highlighted a number of weaknesses in the system including the possibilities of false positives and negatives, a lack of attention to competencies for humanitarian response, and inadequate gender and cultural sensitivities. UNICEF advocated for a re-design, with emphasis on a system that would strike a balance between the gender and regional backgrounds of candidates. The redesign of the RC Competency Assessment System represented a major response to the Joint Nordic Assessment<sup>29</sup> recommendation to strengthen the UN's capacity to train and recruit competent RCs.

UNICEF, according to interviews, played a key role in the redesign, piloting and testing of the new competency assessment system. It chaired the RC Issues Group, participated in various pilots, and fielded candidates for the pilot test. Both UNICEF and external respondents believe that the new system has helped to improve the quality of Regional Coordinators appointed since 2002.

However, mixed perceptions existed in terms of UNICEF's support to the RC system itself at country level. A number of external respondents emphasized that UNICEF country offices have made important contributions, such as providing:

- acting RC or Humanitarian Coordinators;
- financial support to the RC unit; and
- funding of coordination officers in the RC unit.

An analysis of COARs in 2002 and 2003 indicated that country offices appear to be engaged and supportive of the RC system.

Country offices did express some concern that the Resident Coordinator could use the position to influence donor relationships and that it does not always adequately represent UNICEF's mandate and programmatic concerns to national authorities, partners and donors. UNICEF staff members also raised some concerns with respect to competing for the RC system, loss of professional association with UNICEF and the difficulties associated with returning to UNICEF after a posting as Resident Coordinator.

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<sup>28</sup> FSIAS internal report, UNICEF

<sup>29</sup> Laying the Keystone of UN Development Reform: The CCA and UNDAF Experience, Joint Nordic Assessment of the CCA/UNDAF Process, COWI, October 2001

Other issues and comments from the country offices will be discussed in Section 5 of this report.

## **4.6 Policy and Normative Issues**

This section will examine contributions made by UNICEF in three areas: the strengthening of human rights based actions at country level, humanitarian assistance, and gender mainstreaming.

### **4.6.1 Strengthening Human Rights Related Actions at Country Level**

Overall, internal and external respondents agreed that UNICEF has played an instrumental role in promoting a human rights based approach in the inter-agency context. This was central to the UN's follow-up to Action Point 2 of the Agenda for Reform, introduced in 2002. UNICEF's theoretical knowledge and field experience of using a child-rights programming approach were important assets. According to interviewees, the consensus document owes much to the language adopted by UNICEF in the late 1990s for the child-rights based approach.

Both external and internal respondents agreed that the overall evolution towards a rights-based approach was already on track through the SG's focus on human rights in the Agenda for Change Report and the advocacy of the OHCHR.

The following outlines some of UNICEF's key contributions in moving forward the "Human Rights Based Approach".

UNICEF actively lobbied for, promoted and supported the Second Inter-agency workshop (Stamford Workshop) on implementing a human rights-based approach in the context of UN reform. This workshop brought together 76 participants representing ten (10) UN agencies, UNDGO, eight UNCTs, as well as experts, and observers from CIDA, SIDA and DFID who funded the workshop. The key result was a consensus document presenting a statement of common understanding of the human rights-based approach to development cooperation. The workshop also highlighted the lack of country level capacity to implement the HRBA. To address this, the workshop recommended:

- Updating the CCA and UNDAF guidelines to reflect the agreed human rights-based terminology and approach;
- Establishing a UNDG mechanism to promote and monitor implementation of the HRBA; and,
- Including guidance materials in the induction course for Resident Coordinators.

As a follow-up to the Stamford meeting UNICEF supported the development of the Plan of Action as an implementation plan for Action Point 2.

At the country level, particularly among the second generation rollout countries, UNICEF offices have taken the lead in promoting the use of the HRBA.

Both internal and external respondents agreed that the work is just beginning. Country capacity to implement the HRBA is low and very few Resident Coordinators have any practical experience of applying the HRBA. It was agreed "Stamford represents the intent (of the system) and not necessarily a change in practice".

A few external respondents noted that UNICEF has not yet articulated how to link its practical experiences in child rights programming to human rights based programming for the overall UN system. There is still some desire at field level to maintain child rights programming separate from human rights programming.

#### **4.6.2 Humanitarian Assistance**

In 2003, the Secretary General established an inter-agency working group to examine the funding and strategic planning gap that often emerges as countries transit from a major natural disaster or complex emergency to a more regular development cooperation scenario. The UNICEF Executive Director chaired the UNDG/ECHA Working Group on Transition Issues. Completed in late 2003, it provided a common understanding of key concepts related to transition, recovery, peace building, and reintegration, as well as recommendations for making the UN system response to countries in transition settings more coherent.<sup>30</sup>

In 2003, the UNICEF Executive Director noted the wider debate within the UN system about the need for greater continuity between humanitarian assistance and development cooperation. She stated that “UNICEF has adopted the principle of mainstreaming emergency programmes into the country programme process”<sup>31</sup> The organization also made efforts to define a set of Core Corporate Commitments (CCCs)<sup>32</sup> to guide UNICEF’s response to natural disasters and humanitarian emergencies. The Executive Director also commented on UNICEF’s success in the inter-agency consolidated appeal process, as well as in securing early and flexible funding from some donors thereby increasing the efficiency of delivering emergency assistance<sup>33</sup>.

#### **4.6.3 Gender Mainstreaming**

UNICEF has contributed in many ways to the promotion of an increased focus on gender issues within the United Nations system, through<sup>34</sup>:

- Provision of sex disaggregated country level data and information through surveys and studies;
- Active membership on the Inter-Agency Task Force on CCA/UNDAF and Gender, led by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), which revised the guidelines and commissioned the preparation of a resource guide for United Nations theme groups on gender issues analysis;
- Participation on the Inter-Agency Task Team on Gender and HIV/AIDS, where UNICEF played an active role in the preparation of a resource package on gender and HIV/AIDS;
- Leadership of a task force on women, girls and HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa, which aims to intensify action on women, girls and HIV/AIDS and position the issue as a priority for the United Nations system, Governments and civil society;

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<sup>30</sup> Report of the UNDG/ECHA Working Group on Transition Issues, UNDG/ECHA Working Group, December 2003.

<sup>31</sup> Report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: Annual Report to the Economic and Social Council, UNICEF, Economic and Social Council, E/ICEF/2003, p10.

<sup>32</sup> UNICEF Core Corporate Commitments in Emergencies, UNICEF Executive Board, E/ICEF/2000/12, 17 March 2000. The CCCs include: Rapid assessment, fundraising and donor relations, a coordinating role for public health interventions in support of children and women, delivery of emergency supplies and services related to health and nutrition, education, child protection, water supply and sanitation, and ancillary support related to logistics, media and communication, and finance and administration.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>34</sup> Report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: Annual Report to the Economic and Social Council, UNICEF, Economic and Social Council, E/ICEF/2004, p13.

- Participation in a joint UN-OECD workshop focusing on crisis and transition situations, that drew on lessons from Afghanistan and elsewhere to identify good practices for achieving equitable, gender-sensitive reconstruction processes;
- Service as Co-Chair of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Task Force on Gender and Humanitarian Assistance, where UNICEF spearheaded the development of a training module on capacities and vulnerability analysis which is now part of the CAP training manual; and
- Participation on the IASC Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse where UNICEF has supported the plan of action with a training package on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse.

## **4.7 UNICEF's Commitment to UN Reform**

This section will first provide a general description of the perceptions existing at headquarters, regional and country levels with respect to UNICEF's commitment to UN reform. A number of factors have had an impact on the level of commitment to the reform process: These include the undg's communication and consultation strategy with respect to UN reform; the mixed reactions of donor agencies; different mandates and organizational cultures within the ExCom agencies; and, UNICEF's institutional credibility.

### **4.7.1 General Impressions of UNICEF's Commitment to UN Reform**

As mentioned previously, UNICEF's commitment to UN reform has evolved since 1997 from initial reluctance and concerns with its visibility and fund raising abilities to an engagement in the process. Now, as a senior external official indicated, UNICEF understands it is not about losing identity, but about a more coherent system response. There is also widespread agreement that there have been positive shifts in internal attitudes towards UN reform, e.g. the internal debate is now starting in a serious way about how to make UN reform work for children.

However, both UNICEF and external interviews indicate there are still some uncertainties about the ultimate benefits of UN reform in general. External respondents noted that while UNICEF appears to have a strong commitment to UN reform, it is not always evident in practice. A small number of interviewees indicated that this ambivalence on the part of UNICEF impeded decision making and the speedy issuance of guidance.

At the headquarters level, there is a widely held perception among UNICEF and external respondents that commitment towards UN reform is least strong at the regional level. However, some respondents suggested that this applies to the entire UN System and not only to UNICEF. Factors behind this situation may include the additional workload placed on staff through participation in various reader's groups and inter-agency support missions; and the lack of congruence among regional structures and accountabilities of the ExCom agencies.

Although there was wide agreement that UNICEF's intellectual and technical contributions to the development of new tools and processes were critical, nonetheless, a number of external respondents believe that UNICEF internally still has concerns that it has much to lose from the reform process and that this influences its interactions with other agencies.

### **4.7.2 Factors affecting UNICEF's Level of Commitment**

This section will examine a number of factors that play a role in influencing UNICEF's overall level of commitment to UN reform. These include its communication and consultation strategies; mixed messages from donors; existence of different mandates and organizational cultures; and its institutional credibility.

### ***Mixed Messages from the Donors***

UNICEF has acknowledged that it has been very critical of some elements of reform. As a result, some donors believe that UNICEF is still internally focused and reluctant to change how it does business.

However, donors themselves often have contradictory positions on UN reform. While some of the donors want to be able to earmark and track their funding with results-based reports on the one hand, others also want to pool funds to achieve greater effectiveness and economies of scale.

UNICEF often feels it is caught between different positions. On the one hand, there are the like-minded donors<sup>35</sup> who appear to hold the pooling of resources as a litmus test for an agency's commitment to UN reform. On the other, some of UNICEF's largest donors appear to place less emphasis on reform issues, and have not linked their continued funding to UNICEF's performance in reform.

### ***Differences in Mandate and Culture of the ExComs***

Various interviewees have noted that UNICEF has a very strong feeling of being different from the rest of the UN. This comes from its vision, its independent source of funds and its close association with, and championing of, the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

UNDP and UNICEF also exhibit differences in their operating styles, mandate and the way they deal with governments.

- UNICEF has a focused mandate based on human rights and the rights of the child. UNDP has a broader mandate that covers a number of areas including governance, environment and economic development.
- Resource transfer modalities of UNICEF and UNDP are quite different. UNDP transfers much of its funding to government through national execution. UNICEF also claims it supports national execution but in greater partnership than the UNDP.
- UNICEF plays a stronger advocacy role to ensure that the rights of women and children are recognized and met.

These differences will have an impact on the way both organizations perceive and react to various UN reform issues. Discussions on how these differences will affect UN reform will need to continue as they will have implications for joint programming, the UNDAF/UNDG system, and EMOPS.

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<sup>35</sup> The "like-minded" group of donors are normally defined as: Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Ireland, The Netherlands, The United Kingdom and Canada. (Source: UNICEF PFO)

## ***UNICEF Concerns about the Role and Position of UNDP***

Some UNICEF staff fear that UNDP will use UN reform to cement its own relationships with donors and therefore marginalize UNICEF representation at the country level. It is difficult to say how widespread or strong this perception is. However, the COARs do not tend to support this view. Of 38 COARs reviewed, only six (6) commented on some form of “mandate encroachment”. The belief that the Resident Coordinator will try to influence donor relationships is more widespread, but could not be tested.

## ***Institutional Credibility***

UNICEF has the reputation of being an agency “that gets things done”<sup>36</sup>. It has a constituency outside the UN through its National Committees and a network of committed supporters in bilateral aid agencies, and it can rightly claim to be a UN agency with strong brand-name appeal in households across much of the OECD.

There is some concern that UN reform, particularly joint initiatives involving the pooling of resources or common services and facilities will compromise UNICEF’s reputation, its operational independence, and its field level capabilities.

## ***Assessment of UNICEF’s Contribution to UN Reform***

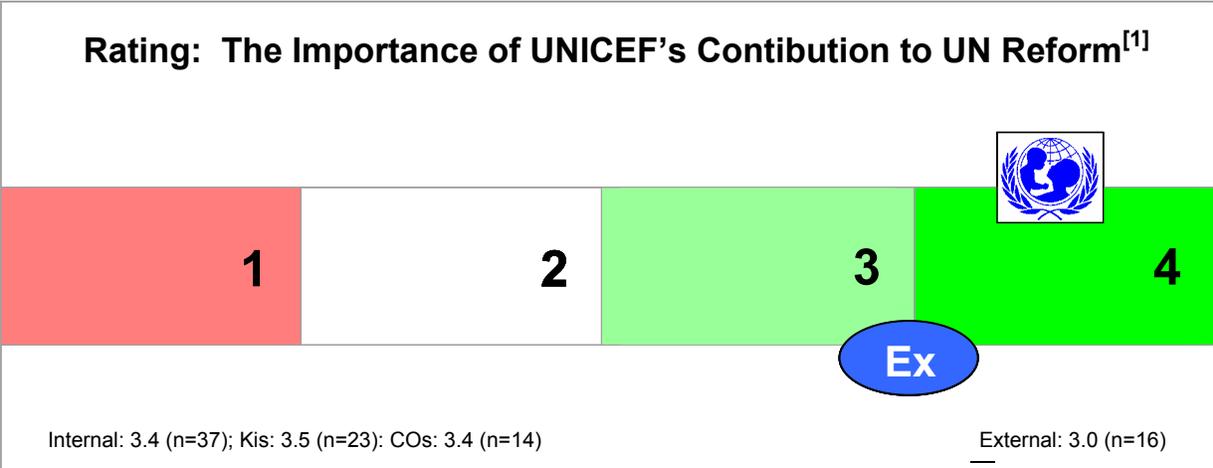
The analysis demonstrates that UNICEF has made a wide range of important efforts to bring UN reform into the mainstream of its policy and programming practices. Examples include:

- A series of Executive Directives helped to communicate the leadership’s commitment to the reform process;
- UNICEF contributed to the development of joint UNDG letters and guidance notes, and distributed them widely;
- UNICEF’s internal guidance for programme process and ProMS have been updated regularly to reflect new UNDG processes;
- The agendas for training and learning events, particularly for UNICEF’s senior leaders, show a willingness to address UN reform challenges at country level;
- Consultation on matters related to UN reform has been conducted regularly via field reference groups and cross-divisional groups at headquarters;
- UNICEF staff have actively participated in key working groups;
- UNICEF has contributed to policy and normative issues such as human rights based actions at country level; humanitarian assistance and gender mainstreaming;
- Consultations have been asked regularly, via their COARs, to reflect and report on UN reform, what is working and what needs improvement; and
- While a wider communication strategy was not in evidence, there were efforts to communicate major developments to the field using a newsletter format.

Both UNICEF and external respondents agreed that UNICEF’s intellectual and technical contributions have been critical to the progress achieved. This finding is supported by the ratings of both UNICEF and external respondents. On a scale of 0 to 4 internal respondents gave an average rating of 3.5 and external respondents a high, but slightly lower rating of 3.

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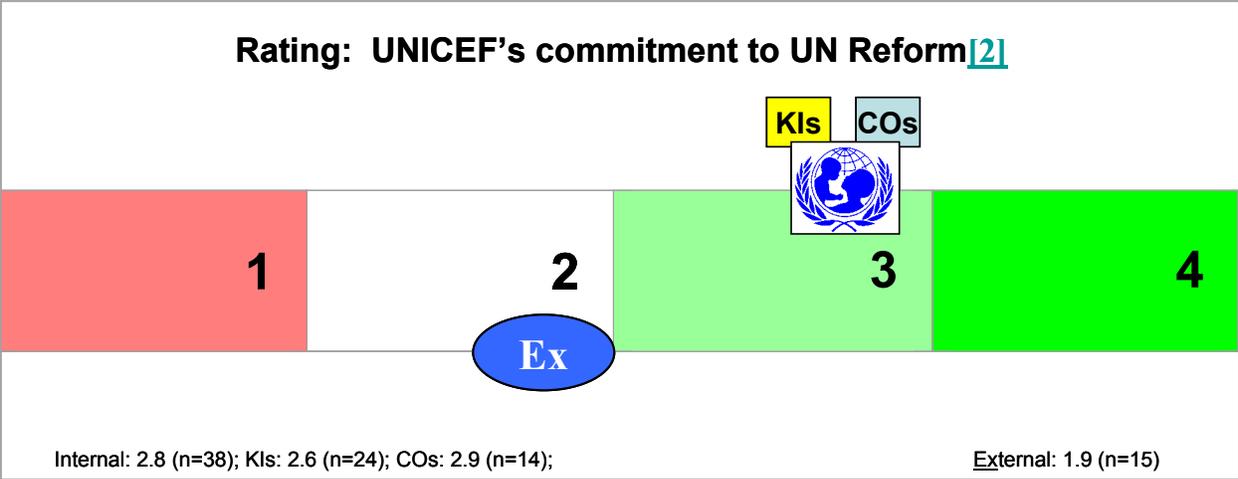
<sup>36</sup> UNICEF Brand Book, UNICEF Intranet, 2004.



[1] Q. How would you rate the importance of the UNICEF's contribution to UN reform? (Where 0 is none, 2 is some/ partial; and 4 is high)

UNICEF has made very good progress in its efforts to bring UN reform into the mainstream of UNICEF policy and practice. Only two years have elapsed since the 2001 TCPR accelerated and intensified reform efforts. This is a very short time frame to carry out large-scale organizational and cultural changes.

However, there still remains some ambivalence about the level of commitment within UNICEF for UN reform. There remains a strong feeling at headquarters that field commitment (regional and country offices) is not fully behind the UN reform exercise. Both internal and external respondents were asked to rate UNICEF's commitment to UN reform on a scale of 0 to 4. The results are provided in the Exhibit below.

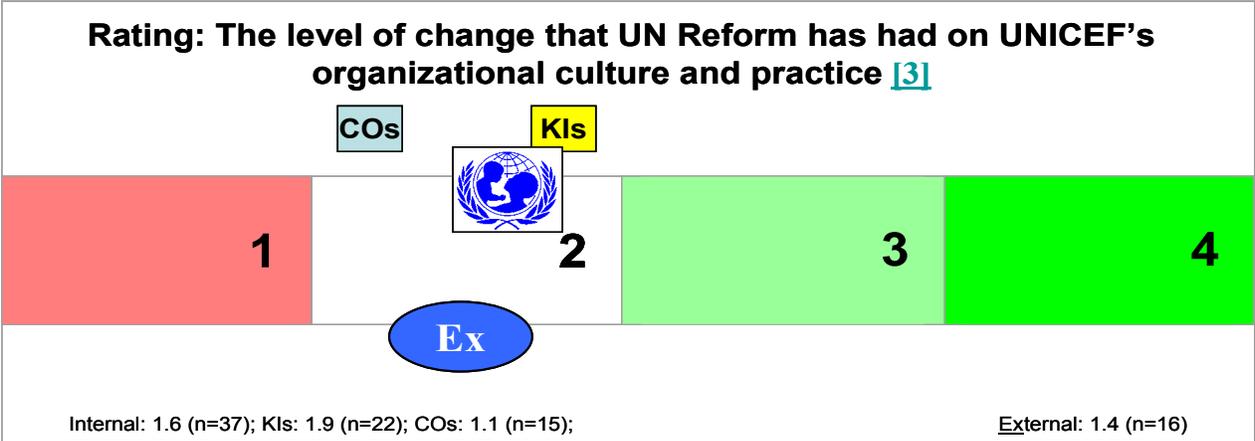


[2] Q. How would you rate UNICEF's overall commitment to UN reform? (Where 0 is none, 2 is some/ partial; and 4 is high)

UNICEF has accommodated UN reform but has not fully mainstreamed it.

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which UN reform had affected organizational culture and practice. On a scale of 0 to 4, UNICEF respondents gave an average rating of 1.6,

while external respondents gave it a slightly lower rating of 1.4. It is interesting to note that country offices perceive a significantly lower level of change than key informants, mostly from headquarter level.



[3] Q. Please rate the level of change that UN reform has had on UNICEF's culture and practice? (Where 0 is none, 2 is some/ partial; and 4 is high)



## **5. THE IMPACT OF UN REFORM ON UNICEF AT COUNTRY LEVEL**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The findings contained in this section are derived from a review by the consultants of Annex B of Country Office Annual Reports for 2002 and 2003. The consultants also carried out a review of a sample of approximately 38 COARs covering the seven UNICEF regions. A detailed country office questionnaire was also sent out to 18 Field Offices. These countries were chosen in consultation with UNICEF staff. In addition, a review was completed of the Regional Office Reports for 2003, which also touch on UN Reform issues albeit in not as well structured a manner as the COARs.

#### **5.1.1 Technical Support for the Country Office**

Technical support for the field offices can come from a number of sources including the more general training activities provided by UNDO and UNICEF headquarters and the specialized technical support that may be required from the regional offices. Overall, the country offices indicated that they received reasonably good technical support, however, support varied and there were some countries that indicated that they received only limited support, notably in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

Overall, eight of 16 surveyed COs indicated that they had not received assistance from their regional office. Of notable exception were the Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltics (CEE/CIS), and to some extent the the Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) and the Americas and Caribbean Regional Office (TACRO). On the other hand, the Reference Group pointed out that some regions, e.g. the Eastern and Southern Africa Region (ESAR) had provided direct support to a number of country offices with respect to the CCA/UNDAF process. Indirect support was also provided through the quality assurance reader group, phone calls, training and e-mails.

COs also indicated that support was often not customized or responsive on an ad hoc basis to their needs. Some of the COs indicated that although training and support was provided, the competency of the different UN agencies varied and the overall result may lead to slower than expected progress, as some agencies could not keep up with the requirements, slowing down the UNCT.

The above was reinforced by a CO in ROSA, which indicated that one major gap is the reliance and increasing demands on a weak RC system for UN reform and coordination and a lack of centrally supported mechanisms to fund increasing responsibilities by RC offices for UN reform.

A review of various COARs, as well as recent meetings to evaluate the MTRs and the responses to the Executive Director's New Years letter, also indicated a perception in some countries, that UNICEF is better equipped technically than other UN agencies in terms of guidelines, training and technical capacity to deal with UN reform. As a result, UNICEF country offices indicated that they have to spend much time themselves taking on tasks that other agencies cannot do, and in assisting other agencies to understand the needs of UN reform. This adds to workload and time spent by offices on UN reform related issues.

## ***Regional Office Support through the QSA System***

One of the features of the CCA/UNDAF processes is the provision for Quality Assurance Support from the regional offices of the ExCom agencies. Regional Offices are supposed to oversee and support common products. They undertake a desk review and provide comments on country offices products. There are some problems, which have arisen with this system.

First, the regional boundaries (and therefore their regional offices) of the various ExCom agencies are different. This has created some, albeit manageable, issues with respect to coordination. Second, some regional offices have indicated that although they spend time making comments on UNCT products such as CCA and UNDAF drafts these comments are not always considered.<sup>37</sup> The lack of mechanisms to ensure that feedback is acted upon by the UNCT may limit its role.

In summary, the COARs, questionnaires and regional office reports indicated that UNICEF offices are among the best trained and resourced of the UN agencies and are therefore among the best equipped to meet their UN reform requirements and to provide technical backup to the country teams. Only about half of the countries responding to the questionnaire indicated receiving technical assistance from the regional office. In fact, a few country offices indicated that they have helped support the RO in UN reform issues.

A few regions indicated some frustration as to its role in providing QSA assistance to UNCTs, as there is no requirement for feedback. The differing UN agency regional boundaries and locations is another source of complexity for the QSA system.

## **5.2 UNICEF and the Resident Coordinator System at the Country Office Level**

### **5.2.1 UNICEF's Role and Contribution to the Country Level RC System**

#### ***Functioning of the RC System***

UNICEF country offices, indicated in the Annex B, reports that the leadership and competency of the RC, as well as his/her ability to act on behalf of the entire UN system rather than UNDP, has a significant impact on the overall ability of the UNCT to perform as a team.

The Annex B reports over the last two years have generally demonstrated a positive trend in the operations of many but not all of the UNCTs. Our analysis indicated that:

- In 2002, 87% of country offices reported that their UNCTs met regularly. In 2003, this had increased to 93%. All regions reported a high percentage of regular meetings, except MENA where in 2003, only 75% of COs reported regular meetings of the UNCT;
- In 2003, 84% of COs reported that the RC-UNCT work plan was developed jointly and agreed to by all UNCT members. This was a slight increase from the 81% reported in 2002;
- In 2002, 66% of COs reported that the programme cycle of the ExCom agencies was harmonized;
- 80% of UNICEF COs reported involvement in the preparation of the RC's annual report; and

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<sup>37</sup> UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS. Lessons Learned in the 2002/2003 CCA/UNDAF Process, Geneva, December 2003. p5

- In 2002, 62% of UNICEF COs provided some financial support to RC support units, but this declined to 48% in 2003.

The following provides a brief overview of the functioning of the UNCTs based on the more detailed analysis of 38 COAR Annex B reports in 2002 and 2003, and the 16 detailed questionnaires sent out for this study.

- A review of a sample of seven countries in the CEE/CIS, indicates that UNCTs were functioning quite well and have performed effectively. The relative newness and small size of the UNCTs were one of the reasons for this good performance, especially in the CIS region. Six of the countries were 2003 rollout countries, which meant that they had regular meetings to develop the CCA and UNDAFs.
- Similarly, the four ROSA countries examined also showed a marked improvement from 2002 to 2003 in the operations of the UNCTs.
- The five EAPR countries reviewed reported that their UNCTs were functioning effectively, with one exception. UNICEF offices also reported a high level of involvement in the development of the UNCT work plans. However, some UNICEF offices expressed concern about a perceived RC conflict of interest between the Resident Coordinator functions and the Resident Representative responsibilities for UNDP.
- The five TACRO countries reviewed demonstrated varying levels of effectiveness of the UNCTs. Some countries expressed concerns with country team continuity or lack of preparation for meetings.
- Similarly, performance of the UNCTs in ESAR was mixed, with countries in the second generation of CCA-UNDAF functioning at a higher level than those in the first generation. Two countries tried to adopt more participatory ownership of the UNCTs by encouraging rotating chairmanships.
- WCAR demonstrated much the same pattern as ESAR; with the second generation, countries working on CCA-UNDAF development exhibiting better functioning UNCTs. Success of the UNCTs was credited to a good balance of team members, an RC who is a team player and strong UNICEF involvement.
- Finally, the four countries in MENA reported poorly functioning UNCTs. In at least two countries, concerns were expressed that the Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative had not fully separated the UNDP responsibilities from being an RC.

### ***UNICEF Contributions to the RC System at the Country Level***

UNICEF contributions can be through participation in the development of the work plan, completion of the annual report, and financial contributions to the RC office and through acting as RC. In 2003, 56% of the UNICEF Representatives reported serving as acting RC or Humanitarian Coordinator compared to 53% in 2002.

According to the survey of country offices completed for this study, the time requirements have been variable. Five countries reported that the UNICEF Representative had spent at least two

months in the position of Acting RC and three additional countries indicated that it occurred frequently. The remaining countries indicated a very infrequent requirement for the Representative to serve as Acting RC.

Some UNICEF Representatives were positive about their experience as Acting RC since it had provided opportunities to give a positive image of what UN reform can be about and improve the “buy-in” while recognizing each agency’s specific mandate and competencies.

Other offices were less enthusiastic, saying that the fact that one was not an UNDP employee had serious limitations in terms of dealing with certain issues. The limitations are related to the way the Representatives were recognized by the host government, other UN agencies, and above all, by the UNDP. They felt they were given a large number of additional responsibilities, especially of a ‘representative nature’ but with very little opportunity to influence issues they felt were important such as putting more emphasis on children in development.

### **5.3 UNICEF Involvement in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers**

In December 1999, the Executive Boards of the IMF and the World Bank approved a new policy instrument, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), designed to serve as a framework document for Fund and Bank lending operations. Specifically, PRSPs were intended as a basis for official external debt forgiveness under the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) Initiative begun in 1996 and subsequently as a pre-condition for financing from the IMF under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) and from the Bank’s concessional lending facility. While the PRSP is intended to address poverty issues within a comprehensive framework and long term vision, it was also intended as an instrument which all donors, including the UN, can use to plan and coordinate their own assistance strategies and budgets<sup>38</sup>. In fact the Guidance note, issued by UNDG<sup>39</sup> specified that: “it is a fact that developing countries are using the PRSP, and donors are increasingly using the PRSP as a needed instrument to plan and coordinate their policies of assistance. As such, UNDG indicated that the PRSP process presented an important opportunity for UNCTs to influence the PRSP process and outcomes.

An analysis of the COARs carried out for this study, revealed that, in 2002, 56 percent of COs reported that there is a PRSP process in their countries. Of these countries, 53 percent of UNICEF country offices reported a “full” level of involvement in PRSP deliberations and preparation.<sup>40</sup> By region, WCAR and ESAR had the largest numbers of COs reporting a national PRSP process (90 and 79 percent respectively). In these regions, over two-thirds of UNICEF offices also indicated they had a full or some level of involvement in the PRSP deliberations (75 percent in WCAR and 67 percent in ESAR).

In CEE/CIS, TACRO and EAPRO the percentage of COs that reported full or some level of involvement in PRSP processes was 83, 78 and 60 percent respectively. In ROSA, about half of COs reported a PRSP process, but here only one reported some level of involvement. In MENA only 1 of 13 COs reports indicated a PRSP process.

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<sup>38</sup> UNDG Guidance Note to United Nations Country Teams on the PRSP, 8 November 2001.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid

<sup>40</sup> This suggests a significant variance from the MOPAN exercise in 2003 which found that “UNICEF is not considered to be a key player in supporting PRSP processes...” Source: MOPAN: Report from the 2003 Pilot Exercise, December 2003

UNICEF country offices also perceived the poverty reduction strategies to be too strongly oriented to economic growth issues with insufficient efforts to address social safety nets. There was, however, only limited evidence in the COARs of the UNCT acting in solidarity to advocate for a more balanced approach.

In the East Asia and Pacific Region, one CO reported that the UN has been providing inputs to the NPRS process on an agency-by-agency basis; another reported “no linkage” between the PRSP and the present UNDAF, which is a defunct document. The experience in WCAR seems to suggest that UNICEF influence in the PRSP process or in sector initiatives is less a result of its affiliation with the UNCT, particularly the ExCom agencies, and more a result of opportunities emerging with the specialized agencies or with external partners.

Of all seven regions, the CEE/CIS region was alone in acknowledging a coordinated UN system approach for participating in the PRSP process. In all five countries where PRSP processes are underway, the UNICEF COs mentioned varying levels of involvement by the UNCT, and use of the UN system as a platform for making advocacy or technical contributions.

UNICEF staff<sup>41</sup> carried out a similar study using the 2002 COARs as an information source. The results also indicated that there have been four ways in which UNICEF contributed to the PRSP processes: advocacy for inclusion of children’s concerns in the PRSPs, presentation of information/data concerning children; provision of technical support to the working groups; especially in the health and education sectors; and support to consultation processes. Examples follow:

- **Advocacy:** UNICEF’s advocacy efforts focused on broadening the definition of poverty, injecting human rights principles into the debate, drawing attention to issues of children and youth and increasing resource allocation to social sectors:
  - In one country, UNICEF advocacy contributed to an increased allocation to health, education and social action by 20 per cent in 2003;
  - In another, the President stated publicly that poverty reduction should start with children and sought UNICEF assistance;
  - In another country, UNICEF led the analysis of inclusion of social sectors in the PRSP.
- **Data Monitoring:** UNICEF’s major inputs related to analysis of children’s situation, collection and dissemination of current data, analysis of data to show disparities, poverty analysis and monitoring performance:
  - In one country, the Ministry of Finance conducted a Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey and an assessment of social and economic conditions used in the PRSP. UNICEF published the surveys helping to position it as the lead agency on poverty reduction;
  - In another country, UNICEF provided training on data analysis techniques to government staff, particularly those in the Secretary of Planning; and,
  - UNICEF provided MICS data, validation of indicators, methodological input and support for gender analysis and evaluation of the Expanded Programme of Immunization in another country.

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<sup>41</sup> Internal Review of UNICEF and PRSPs as reported in the 2002 COARs, UNICEF 2003

- **Technical Support:** UNICEF contributed to the PRSP activities at the sector level, mainly in education and health. UNICEF staff participated in PRSP working groups and in a few cases, deployed UNICEF staff to PRSP secretariats at the request of government:
  - UNICEF participated in small working groups or in sectoral groups for education and health;
  - In another country, UNICEF defined and elaborated major priority issues for health. The agency also seconded a professional (part-time) to lead the PRSP education task group.
  - In another country, UNICEF was involved in the early stages of the preparatory process, in particular for the sector wide approaches (SWAPs) in the field of health, education and the legal system.
  
- **Support for coordination and logistics:** UNICEF assistance in the area ranged from coordination of stakeholder meetings serving as a clearinghouse of child-related information that informed some PRSPs, to the donation of funds or transport to PRSP working groups.
  - In one country the Ministry of Finance asked UNICEF to manage all information and media aspects of the PRSP; and,
  - In another, UNICEF organized a workshop with the consultants charged with writing the PRSP. Civil society organizations and UNICEF were also asked to develop strategies for the social sectors.

In summary, overall, UNICEF offices reported significant involvement in PRSP activities. The emerging niche for the organization<sup>42</sup> appears linked to its capacity for advocacy, provision of information on children, technical inputs in social sectors and its facilitation role with working groups and CSOs around PRSP activities.

The UNICEF country offices have noted the inconsistent approaches taken by the country teams in participating in and influencing the PRSP processes. In addition, some COARs cited the weak capacity of UNICEF in some countries to advocate for children in the PRSP process as well. UNICEF offices, although positive about some of the PRSP processes undertaken, expressed concerns about the tendency of the PRSP to be pre-occupied with macro economic issues and infrastructure development and with insufficient attention paid to the social sectors.

## **5.4 UNICEF Contributions to Country Level UN Programming**

This Section describes the UNICEF contribution at the country level with a focus on programming, including the advancement of the Human Rights Based Approach, Theme groups and Joint Programming.

### **5.4.1 UNICEF and the Human Rights Based Approach at the Country Level**

UNICEF is considered a leading advocate for the Human Rights Based Approach, and is known for promoting the HRBA at the country level. The extent, to which UN reform has been able to support this approach, is not well documented.

Interviews at the headquarters level, as well as a review of a sample of COARs Annex B reports indicated that promoting the HRBA approach in programme countries has been a challenge.

The COARs provide some evidence of what has been occurring. For example, in the CEE/CIS region, UNCTs reported that they were struggling with the human rights based approach, and

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<sup>42</sup> Internal Review of UNICEF and PRSPs as reported in the 2002 COARs, UNICEF 2003

this, in turn, caused some frustration for UNICEF. Issues raised included a lack of consensus among agencies on what a human rights based document is, and a lack of models. As a result, UNHCHR in Geneva provided assistance in reshaping and redrafting the document in order to have the first model human rights CCA. This was done following interventions by UNICEF.

In other countries, some UN agencies appeared reluctant to acknowledge that human rights are the legitimate business of the UN. Reports indicate that only UNICEF and UNHCR explicitly address rights issues in their Country Programme outcomes. One country reported that the reflection of the Human Rights Based Approach, within a Results Based Framework, has been extremely difficult, and has put extra burden on UNICEF to get other agencies to internalize the approach.

A review of the COARs also indicated that in 3 of 6 ESAR countries studied, UNICEF played the role of an inter-agency advocate to ensure that a human rights based approach was adopted by the UNCT and used during the CCA and UNDAF preparation processes. In all cases, the process was challenging and took additional time and energy for IA discussions and negotiations, let alone the process of applying a rights-based approach to the actual work of analysis and priority setting.

In TACRO two of the five countries reported promotion of the human rights issues in the development of the CCA/UNDAF. In these countries, the CCA has served as the central document for UNICEF and the other agencies, both in planning their 2004-2008 country programs, and for advocacy purposes.

In another TACRO country, UNICEF reported intentionally seeking to utilize a rights-based approach in the five thematic workshops relating to the UNDAF process. It was instrumental in diversifying the participant list of the different focus groups, inviting Indigenous leaders, environmental activists, campesino leaders, youth leaders (members of the UNICEF Youth Council played an active role). Since both UNICEF members of the Steering Committee have had HRBA training and experience, UNICEF input was continuously sought and incorporated along the way regarding process and content. UNICEF officers also participated in HRBA and Results Based Management training.

In two countries in WCAR UNICEF played an advocacy role within the UNCT to ensure that the CCA and UNDAF preparation processes used a human rights based approach.

In summary, the COARs indicate that UNICEF has been promoting a Human Rights Based Approach in the CCA and UNDAF exercises. It is also apparent that this has posed a challenge to UNICEF country offices and has been resource intensive for the UNICEF country teams. Some UNCTs have found it difficult to articulate how to apply the HRBA, and this has placed a further strain on UNICEF resources in helping to conceptualize the application of the HRBA. Another factor to consider is that the amount of effort devoted to HRBA may vary according to the stage in the harmonization cycle and whether the country is in the newer generation of countries involved in the preparation of UNDAFs.

#### **5.4.2 Theme Groups**

A feature of UN Reform has been the creation of theme groups to address issues common to a number of UN agencies at the country level. Analyses of the COARs as well as the country office questionnaires indicated that although UNICEF participates in numerous theme groups, only a few are considered truly effective and worthwhile at the country level. Moreover, some of

the theme groups enumerated by country offices relate to administrative processes: the CCA and UNDAF or the development of common services. It should be noted that in the countries reporting on theme groups, 8 to 10 of these were chaired by UNICEF, which involved considerable time and commitment on the part of UNICEF staff.

The 16 countries reporting on theme group involvement indicated that they have been able to influence the country teams in many cases in the following way:

- Improving the analysis and approach to the CCA and UNDAF;
- Increasing the focus and quality of Human Rights and HIV/AIDS programming; and,
- Influencing, in a limited number of cases, the PRSP and SWAP analysis.

Some of the country offices believed that they had successfully influenced the above areas, while others indicated that they believed that their ability to increase the focus on HIV/AIDS and to promote the Human Rights Based Approach through theme groups had been ineffective, with some exceptions in the CEE/CIS region. The following provides a regional perspective on the effectiveness of theme groups.

### ***CEE/CIS Region***

Across the CEE/CIS region, UNICEF demonstrated a high level of commitment to UN Theme Groups. All of the sampled countries reported a theme group for HIV/AIDS. Five of the seven countries reported excellent returns on the efforts of their HIV/AIDS theme groups, and in at least two countries, the theme groups were responsible for supporting implementation by obtaining resources from the Headquarters Funds. In one country the Theme Group was directly involved in proposal development and fundraising that realized over \$11 million USD from the Headquarters Fund, the World Bank and SIDA.

Two other countries reported that their HIV/AIDS theme groups had not performed to expectations. In one country, the group was too large and cumbersome for effective work and lacked an effective chair. In another, the factors contributing to the poor performance of the group were the lack of regular meetings, poor coordination and the fact that many of the UN organizations preferred to work bilaterally.

UNICEF also used theme groups to seek added advantage for its other corporate priorities, particularly child protection. In one country, the anti-trafficking group successfully advocated for the inclusion of anti-trafficking issues into the new criminal code. In another country, the significant UN presence has led to the creation of higher-level IA working groups. UNICEF is a lead agency and chairs a working group for Juvenile Justice Reform. UNICEF also co-chairs with the EC, the working group on quality and modernization of pre-school, primary and general secondary education. In terms of UN theme groups, UNICEF made significant contributions to the gender theme group, and has committed to supporting the establishment of the Gender Equality Agency at the state level.

### ***East Asia and Pacific Region***

In the East Asia and Pacific Region, UNICEF country teams demonstrated a relatively high level of commitment to UN Theme Groups. However, not all theme groups were able to promote UNICEF corporate priorities in a strategic manner.

The one constant for the region was that all countries had an active HIV/AIDS theme group that reported a range of contributions to government strategic frameworks or to improved agency coordination. In one country, for example, the Theme Group provided technical support to the Government to prepare and submit a \$5 million USD proposal to the Headquarters Fund, subsequently approved.

### ***South Asia Region***

In the South Asia Region (ROSA), UNICEF demonstrated a high level of commitment to UN Theme Groups. With the exception of one country, all countries examined had an active HIV/AIDS theme group, chaired by UNICEF that made major contributions to government strategic frameworks or action plans.

Across the region, UNICEF contributed to a number of theme groups and in turn promoted UNICEF priorities. Examples include:

- The development of a common advocacy platform and tools for engaging the media in a Girls Education theme group; and
- UNICEF chaired a group responsible for the development of guidelines to prevent under-age recruitment in the Underage Recruitment Working Group. These formed the basis of a National Action Plan for children affected by war. Membership in the Group now includes representatives from civil society. It has played an important role in ensuring ongoing and wide support for UNICEF's sensitive work on the issue of child soldiers.

### ***ESAR Region***

In the Eastern and Southern Africa Region, UNICEF was heavily involved in UN Theme Groups. All of the COARs sampled indicated that the theme groups played critical roles in the preparation of the CCA and UNDAF. Some of the key contributions are listed below. In all of the countries examined except one, there were active HIV/AIDS theme groups.

- In one country, the Theme Group mobilized funds from the Turner Foundation, supported the enactment of an AIDS levy and the creation of National AIDS Council. An initiative to promote a multi-sectoral response to HIV/AIDS in six districts was supported which promoted UNICEF's community capacity development strategy and programme.
- In another country, the UNICEF Representative chaired the theme group, and UNICEF assisted the National AIDS coordinating Agency in the finalization of the National HIV/AIDS strategic framework for 2003-2009, with concrete linkages to the UNDAF.

In a third country, there were major efforts to "institutionalize" discussions on HIV/AIDS. As a result, a rapid assessment of the country's response to the issue of women, girls and HIV/AIDS was undertaken and progress was made to address HIV/AIDS in the workplace. The UNCT built upon the work done within UNICEF and joined a headquarters UNDP project to develop a coordinated "We Care" programme. Counselling, prevention, treatment, policy implementation and management Task Forces were also created.

UNICEF has also advocated addressing data gaps. In one country, UNICEF successfully advocated for a thematic group on Data for Development. Comprising various UN agencies and the Central Statistical Office, the thematic group provides strategic support for the collection, analysis, use, dissemination, and storage of socio-economic data relevant to the MDGs.

Negative feedback on theme group operations was less common. However, there was some indication that theme groups are still driven by agency mandates. Most countries in the region also indicated that the demands of the theme group generate a substantial workload.

### ***West Africa Region (WCAR)***

In West Africa, UNICEF indicated that considerable energy and time were devoted to theme group meetings and to the drafting of elements of both the CCA and UNDAF. In all five countries examined, there were active HIV/AIDS theme groups that made major contributions to government strategic frameworks or action plans.

There were a number of developments across the region highlighting significant UNICEF contributions:

- In one country, the Food Security theme group supported the elaboration and adoption of the National Food Security Programme, a sectoral policy paper to supplement the Government's PRSP. Collaboration between FAO, UNDP, WFP and ECA led to a UN harmonized approach to food security, a major domain of cooperation of the UNDAF. This has provided the basis for enhanced partnership with Government, communities, other donors and NGOs and for a coordinated response to periodic food crises and malnutrition outbreaks, especially at the household level.
- In another country, where there is a mix of three functional coordinating groups (programme, operations and emergency preparedness) and two theme groups related to HIV/AIDS and social development, the latter theme group was able to secure a two-year UNF grant for \$1.05 million dollars for a joint project "Empowering communities to improve children's health".
- In another country, where UNICEF chairs a single functioning theme group for HIV/AIDS, the group played a pivotal role in securing funding from the Headquarters Fund (GFATM).

### ***Middle East and North Africa Region***

In the MENA region, the UNICEF COs reported only moderate involvement in UN theme groups. In all four countries reviewed in the COARs, there was an active HIV/AIDS theme group. In this region, each CO reported that the HIV/AIDS theme groups made major contributions to situation reports, government strategic frameworks, and national action or advocacy plans.

In one second-generation country, the overall view was that theme groups are not effectively used by the UNCT and have had only limited impact on strategy development or program coordination. The theme groups meetings are informative but serve no coordination purposes.

There was one exception. In this country, an active Gender Equity/ Girls Education theme group, co-chaired by UNICEF, has made major advances, including:

- Provision of inputs to the national strategy for basic education and the country EFA proposal;
- Reaching agreement among all partners in basic education to provide support to the national framework for basic education; developing a consolidated training plan for the World Bank/UNICEF supported Child Development Project; and,
- Developing a Project and World Bank supported Basic Education Expansion Project (BEEP).

### ***Central and South America (TACRO) Region***

The effectiveness of theme groups in this region was variable. The TACRO countries reported that they had had extensive involvement in and had applied efforts to making the theme groups work. UNICEF provided leadership in a number of important theme groups. Following is a brief synopsis of the activity in TACRO for some of the sampled countries.

- One country reported in 2003, that the only functioning Theme Groups were: the UNAIDS Theme Group; and, the UN Emergency Technical Team. Both have functioned reasonably well, but at the technical rather than head of agency level.
- In 2003, another country had a number of active theme groups: Inter-Agency Social Spending Thematic Group and MDGs (relatively active); Inter-Agency Gender Committee; UNAIDS Theme Group; Inter-Agency Group on Civil Registry and Vital Statistics; UN Emergency Team (UNETE); Inter-Agency Human Rights Group; and the Inter-Agency Food Security and Nutrition theme group. These Theme Groups appeared to be effective and active in working together and in support of the government.

In summary, UNICEF has been active in theme groups in most countries reviewed for this evaluation. The most useful theme groups have been in HIV/AIDS, and in some countries in emergency or disaster management, or occasionally in education and health. Country offices reported that theme groups take up a lot of their time, sometimes with mixed results. Country offices reported that the theme group environment does help UNICEF promote its priorities such as human rights, and child protection.

#### **5.4.3 Joint Programming**

Joint Programming constitutes one of the important long-term goals of UN Reform, as it is a mechanism for producing more coherent and better-coordinated UN country programming. There are a number of ways of defining joint programming. The common differentiation is between individual programming (one agency only), parallel programming (where two or more agencies collaborate on a program, but each manages its own resources), and pooled programming where agencies pool resources and one party (or a joint management group) may take on management responsibilities. The financial aspects of joint programming have been a challenge for UNICEF as joint programming, if handled using a pooling or pass through mechanism, requires adjustment to UNICEF's financial procedures in order to ensure financial visibility, as well as accountability and transparency for UNICEF's donors.

The discussion on joint programming below is based on an internal UNICEF study completed in 2003 based on the 2002 COARs.

According to the internal UNICEF analysis<sup>43</sup>, 103 of 125 UNICEF country offices reported having some form of joint programming in 2002. Of the 103 countries, 43% of the joint programming was based on common geographic areas and 45% on common target populations. Furthermore, in 94 countries the joint programming arose out of UN inter-agency initiatives.

The study also indicated that in some cases the UNDAF provided a framework for the review of joint programming opportunities, but that overall it appears that the UNDAF has not as yet been effective in ensuring that country programs are coordinated and that joint programming is taking place in the context of country programs currently derived from the UNDAF.

**Donor driven joint programming** was reported in 28 countries, i.e. in 26% of the 103 countries that have some form of joint programming:

- A relatively higher percentage of countries in ESARO (11 of 21 countries) and ROSA (3 of 7 countries) report donor driven initiatives than EAPRO (5 of 14), and WCARO (7 of 24 countries); and
- Only one country in TACRO and none of the countries in CEE/CIS and MENA, reported donor driven joint programming.

**Government coordinated joint programming** is mentioned in only 14 countries as a source of joint programming. Six of these countries are in TACRO and four in EAPRO.

**Other Fora** were mentioned as a source of joint programming by 62 countries (61%). These include donor co-ordination, regional banks and MLO forums, WB collaboration and consultation. Regionally 19 of 24 countries in WCARO, 15 of 21 countries in ESARO, 11 of 22 in TACRO, and 9 of 14 in EAPRO accounted for this.

**SWAPs** were reported in 27 countries (26%). Almost half of these were reported in one region, ESARO (12). A lower proportion was reported in WCARO (7 of 24), in CEE/CIS (3 of 20), and in ROSA (2 of 7).

Most of the joint programming initiatives were reported in the Health sector (47 of 103 countries or 45%); HIV/AIDS (42 of 103 countries or 40%); Nutrition (30 countries); Education (30 countries); Child Protection (19 countries); Adolescents (14), Poverty Alleviation (12), and Gender (11) and Emergencies (11).

UNICEF's UN partners in joint programming initiatives: include: UNFPA (56 of 103 countries, 54%); UNDP (47 of 103 countries, 45%); WHO (47 of 103 countries, 46%); WFP (27 of 103 countries, 26%); UNESCO (21 of 103 countries, 20%); UNHCR (16 of 103 countries); UNAIDS (15 of 103 countries); ILO and WB, (14 each). Six UNICEF country offices mention OCHA as a partner in joint programs.

It appears that in at least 69 countries, there is some parallel/joint programming occurring, or in over half of the 125 reporting countries. However, only 14 countries indicated that pooling is occurring, while 55 characterized the joint programming in the country as parallel programming. It is presumed the remaining 31 have informally coordinated their programming.

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<sup>43</sup> It should be noted that this study was based on "a poorly defined" concept of joint programming, which prevailed prior to the issuance of the UNDG Guidance Note and a forthcoming UNICEF note. Hence, Country Office responses may not match up to the definitions now in use.

The study listed a number of different aspects of how joint programming can add value based on the COAR responses, although these are most likely theoretical. They include the following:

- Clearer roles and responsibilities;
- Complementarities of comparative strengths of different agencies;
- Less overlap and duplication; more integrated approach to beneficiaries; wider coverage;
- Learning of different methodologies and programming techniques;
- Access to non-traditional government counterparts;
- Common front with government as well as a strengthened empirical base for dialogue with government;
- Enhanced impact; attainment of common goals; mainstreaming children's and women's issues;
- Inclusion of human rights and gender approaches;
- Efficient use of resources;
- Reduced transaction costs for governments;
- Access to additional funds; and
- More legitimacy and respect from donors and governments.

By contrast, the COs that were involved in "joint programming", in the sense of producing a single programme/project document, and/or working out pooled funding arrangements are typically more critical, and more aware of the costs and the benefits. These are:

- Long lead time and staff time in putting projects together;
- Differing target populations, arising out of differing methodologies/mandates;
- Difficulties of joint management and co-ordination and sometimes less efficient; decision making structures and processes;
- Different procedures and administration systems;
- Different performance standards in implementation;
- Different capacities – related to field presence, number of staff, capacity for programming, etc.;
- Differing implementation modalities (NEX, etc);
- Different implementation planning/unsynchronized work plans;
- Loss of visibility;
- Competition for donor funds;
- Unequal partnership – one lead agency;
- Lack of clear UNICEF policy on joint programming and pooled funding;
- Agencies prioritization of agency specific over inter-agency; and,
- Different agency cultures and training.

In summary, the internal study of the 2002 COARs indicated that over 80% of the reporting countries were engaged in joint programming. However, this is based on self-reporting and country office interpretation of what constitutes joint programming.

In spite of the high level of reported joint programming, a recent meeting held between the Secretary General and the four Special Envoys on HIV/AIDS in particular (January 2004) indicated a number of issues related to UN system coordination related to joint programming for HIV/AIDS. These include:

- A lack of common vision in UN country teams;
- The tendency of country teams to focus on endless analysis rather than implementation; and
- The fact that the Joint Programme and Unified Budget and Work plan are limited to

headquarters and regional activities at present.

The Special Envoys noted that there is a need for the UNCTs to collectively agree on one programme to support a national strategy and to speak with one voice. There is also a need for improved coordination and for the pooling of implementation, monitoring and evaluation capacity as well as financial resources.

#### **5.4.4 Common Premises and Services**

Overall, UNICEF has engaged in common premises in 46 of 58 “UN Houses” that have been established. According to UNICEF staff, the 12 countries in which UNICEF has not participated are primarily situations where UNICEF either owns its own building, is installed in a rent-free government provided building, or where the economics of moving do not make sense.

There are two examples of successful approaches to common premises and services.

- In one country, the UN House has served as common premises for UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNFPA and UNV since March 2001. The UN system has made savings because of common services mainly related to the UN House conference facilities, shared travel arrangements and substantial discounts offered to the UN as a whole for hotel accommodation. A 35% discount offered to the UN for courier services has also contributed to savings. The savings made because of common conference facilities at UN House, and the hosting of conferences previously held at hotels at a cost, was \$16,400 between March 2003 and February 2004, as compared to \$12,800 between February 2002 and March 2003. The income generated by the UN in 2003 in 2003 by renting out the conference facilities to non-UN agencies was nearly \$12,500 and these funds were used to further upgrading of the library and conference facilities. A number of other common services were established and function well. Additional savings are expected in the future.
- In another country, common services initiatives are developed and managed by the UNMOT, which acts under the overall guidance of the UNCT. The UNDP and UNICEF Operations Officers play a leading role in the process. In 2003, in order to bring in other agencies, Inter-agency Technical Task Forces (TTF) were established with time-bound and output specific TORs to deal with specific aspects of new services/activities. Members of the TTFs were selected based on their skills and competencies. The TTFs brought staff members from different agencies together in a positive and constructive manner. The use of the “lead agency” agency concept was also established in order to spread the workload more evenly and ensure broader ownership. Cost savings were a concern since at first no real assessment had been made of the frequent meetings or the benefit, if any, of the more complex procedures resulting from them. However, some promising steps were taken towards coordinated procurement for office stationary, where there will be savings through higher volumes. The expectation is to achieve quantifiable savings in 2004, for the system as a whole. The OMT meets frequently (like the UNCT, every two weeks) and a strong UN team spirit has developed.

## 5.5 Impact on UNICEF Country Programming

### 5.5.1 Impact of the CCA on the quality of analysis, priorities and the CP

Country offices reported on the usefulness of the CCA, and the quality of the analysis contained therein. The reports coming from the COARs, stressed the usefulness albeit the time consuming nature of the process. However, at least three regions (MENA, ROSA, WCAR), have not considered the CCA to provide sufficient value to UNICEF considering the time and energy expended. The following provides an overview of the perceptions of the CCA by region.

#### *CEE/CIS*

- In four of the seven countries studied, the CCA processes and products were perceived as a generally effective and useful tool that describes the situation and priority issues from the UN perspective. The strength of the CCA is that it is much wider than the traditional UNICEF Situation Analysis and deals better with the context in which UNICEF is working. In one country, the process of preparing the CCA was highly dynamic and led to an unprecedented level of cooperation between the UN agencies and the World Bank. The CO reported that the development of the document enabled the examination of the human rights and freedoms of vulnerable groups of people in the country and it presents a people-focused analysis of problems and causes which is complementary to the PRSP. For this CO, the CCA has already proven its usefulness as the basis for a rights-based UNDAF.
- In another country, the CCA was developed in a highly participatory manner. It received complete endorsement by the Government. The CCA/UNDAF preparation process was notable for the active participation of the Government, civil society, academic organizations, World Bank, USAID and representatives from the Youth Parliament. There was a strong sense of ownership on the government's side. In another country, it was reported that the CCA was very useful for identifying the challenges and priorities, which the country must address, and for helping the UN identify its own development niche.
- The remaining three countries were less positive about the quality and usefulness of the CCA. The issues raised by these countries include the following:
  - The need for a better analysis of problems from a rights perspective;
  - The need for a more participatory approach among the UN team;
  - The difficulty of tackling sensitive political issues, e.g. refugees;
  - Unrealistic expectations from all agencies about the time needed to complete the CCA which did not allow for wider participation of government and NGOs;
  - No room to go into detail in assessing and analyzing specific child rights and women's rights violations; and
  - The need to provide training support such as the CCA/UNDAF Human Rights workshop at the beginning of the process, rather than in the middle to "ensure that agencies are on the same wavelength."

## ***EAPRO***

- Four of the five countries studied, reported that the CCA process and product were perceived positively. One of the second-generation countries in the region, perceived the CCA as effective in analyzing the “conditions underlying the MDGs”. Overall, the CO felt that the CCA and UNDAF enabled UNICEF to better appreciate the analytical perspective and program activities of other UN agencies particularly in addressing goals, which have implications on children and their families. There is an expectation that this will provide a more solid basis for joint programming. Finally, the CO perceived the CCA as timely, providing an important reference for the government’s new Medium-Term Development Plan for the period 2004-2010.
- Another country said that the CCA was prepared just before the planning for the current country programme. UNICEF did not undertake a separate situation analysis report, but contributed to the specific areas of the CCA related to children and women. The CCA was therefore the basis for developing the country programme. In the East Asia and Pacific Regional Office, five CCAs were completed in 2002 for five of the 14 Pacific Island Countries. These have been provided to key donors in the region as advocacy tools. UNICEF took a key role in leadership and development of themes for four of the CCAs and learned much from the process.
- However, one country expressed a very different view. This CO reports that the UNCT has real concerns about both transactional and opportunity costs of the CCA-UNDAF process. The CO reports a strong sense of “process fatigue” among Government and donor partners alike. In this case, The National Poverty Reduction Strategy (NPRS) 2003-2005, while imperfect, is perceived to best encompass national development priorities including those related to the WFFC. An emerging consensus among the Government and donors is to converge all the macro planning and review of development activities into the NPRS process. With this in mind, and given the plethora of analysis and information, the CCA as a separate UN exercise is considered unnecessary.

## ***ESAR***

All six countries studied indicated that the CCA was useful, relevant, and had facilitated greater collaboration among agencies and with government and civil society partners. In one country, it was felt that the process had led to an UNDAF with “five substantive areas that are central to UNICEF’s interest and agenda”. In another, where UNICEF led the drafting process, consultations with Government resulted in a common understanding of the key development challenges and identification of the priority areas of intervention.

## ***MENA***

For the four countries studied in MENA region, perceptions about the usefulness of the CCA are generally negative. Comments were made that the process was “not adequate for programming”, with major shortfalls in the areas of child protection. Other countries reported that the process was inactive or under-utilized for programme planning.

## **ROSA**

- In three of the four countries studied, the weaknesses of the CCA eclipsed its strengths. One first generation country indicated that the quality of the CCA is good, it reflects UNICEF interests and concerns, and UN agencies consider it a framework for preparing country programmes and for discussions with partners.
- In a second-generation country in the region, UNICEF played a leading role in CCA preparations including data compilation and support for adoption of a rights-based approach to analysis and programming. It was felt that the final CCA was neither strong on analyzing the underlying causes of social problems nor was it clear in establishing causalities. Moreover, the government abridged the CCA, which resulted in a loss of the rights-based approach and revision of statistics.
- Other countries indicated that their 1999 CCA document had not been updated although the CCA indicators were reviewed and updated in 2002. Another country indicated that although the CCA was completed in May 2002, it is not being used as an advocacy or programming tool. It has been “superseded” by the government’s economic strategy and PRSP.

To conclude on a more positive note, UNICEF’s role as a “data centre” emerged very clearly in at least three countries. UNICEF has used its comparative advantage in terms of collection, analysis and use of quantitative social data to influence common databases and information systems, such as ChildInfo, for the UN system.

## **TACRO**

- Four of the reporting countries were positive about the usefulness of the CCA but CO opinions varied on the process used for its preparation.
- Although the CCA was drawn up with the broad and active participation of all the agencies of the United Nations System, some countries felt that it did not reflect an in-depth analysis of UNICEF issues. It had attempted to include a wide range of issues (specific concerns of various UN agencies) in the limited number of pages required by guidance from UNDG.
- One country reported that the UNICEF Situation Analysis benefited from the broader analysis on good governance, poverty reduction and sustainable human development brought by other agencies into the CCA/UNDAF. These topics were included in the new Country Programme of Cooperation documentation. The potential of the CCA/UNDAF is enormous and its appropriation and implementation will be beneficial for all UN agencies. The CO believes that the participatory process for the formulation of the CCA/UNDAF contributed a more cohesive and supportive environment for the UN Representatives and Senior Staff of the different UN agencies. Although the collaboration among UN agencies and staff has continued it needs strengthening with periodic retreats and the effective work of the thematic groups.
- A human rights approach was used in one country in the preparation of the CCA and it provided inputs to the elaboration of the National Plan of Action.

- Another country reported that the CCA was used in the development of the Country Assistance Strategy (World Bank) and in developing the UNICEF/Government Situation Assessment. It has brought an integrated view to the UN's work highlighting issues requiring attention.
- Whereas the past two years have seen a number of surveys, census and research, one country felt that these were not reflected enough in the document. All the agencies of the system began with different starting points, concepts and experience in rights based programming. Staff will need time and energy to adapt to the process.

### ***WCAR***

- For the five countries studied in WCAR, perceptions about the usefulness of the CCA appeared to split along generational lines. In one country, UNICEF chaired the CCA steering committee as well as some working groups and was successful in promoting the ChildInfo software as the common UN database for CCA preparation and monitoring. The CCA-UNDAF exercises proved extremely useful to the UNICEF Programming Process, and UNDAF priorities and outcomes truly form the basis for the preparation of the country programme of cooperation.
- In another country, the time commitment paid off with a document that provided the background for enhanced collaboration among UN agencies and with Government. In spite of this gain, the CO reports that, as a collective product, the CCA does not provide all the detailed information developed through the traditional UNICEF Situation Analysis (SITAN).
- Reactions were less positive in two countries. Although the CO did see the process as a positive one, bringing together UN Agencies and stimulating a desire to learn about each other's work and processes, the results were not much.

In summary, the CCA processes and results are mixed. Regions such as CEE/CIS expressed satisfaction with the process and the results. Other regions were more uneven, with some finding the process to be useful, but the resulting CCA not sufficiently analytical or in-depth to be useful.

### **5.5.2 Impact and Usefulness of the UNDAF on the Design of the Country Programme**

The following analysis is based on the 16 Country Office questionnaires received as well as the analyses conducted of the COARs of 38 countries in seven regions.

In general, the questionnaire responses from 16 country offices reported that the UNDAF process is useful, but time consuming. Some COs noted that UNICEF had put a lot of effort and time into the UNDAF development and believed that in this way they had influenced the structure and content of the UNDAF. This was corroborated through a review of the COARs for 38 countries. Many countries saw the UNDAF as a positive initiative that should result in greater UN programme cohesion. However, it was not always clear to them what impacts it would have on the CP design of other agencies.

Most countries reported that the process was good but that it generally did not have any major influence on their Country Program, either positive or negative. Some countries emphasized

that the UNDAF generally reflected UNICEF concerns. Some important benefits as reported by countries are described below:

- An increase in the number of partners coordinating their programming inside as well as outside the UN. The UN agencies still seem to have a tendency to work within their own silos and compete with each other rather than complement each other. The UNDAF served as a good platform for UNICEF's programming exercise and clearly helped focus the UNICEF CP towards the achievement of UNDAF outcomes and national priorities.
- The UNICEF CP has flowed well from the UNDAF and all UNICEF CP outcomes and outputs have been incorporated into the UNDAF Results Matrices. Both the CCA and UNDAF have assisted greatly in focusing the work of all agencies in a more coordinated way for the benefit of children, women and poor families. Joint initiatives are already emerging from the UNDAF process and the Results Matrices clearly indicate how coordinated UN work, together with a range of national partners, will lead to positive outcomes for children and women. There has been no pressure from other levels of UNICEF to include within the CP themes not included in the UNDAF.
- The UNDAF components pertaining to the realization of child rights have been defined according to UNICEF CP priorities and strategies, representing the inverse of the usual process. UNICEF molded the UNDAF direction in order that the UNDAF would be in tune with the UNICEF CP.
- Programme designs may not have changed much; however, the selection of partners has clearly been adjusted to complement the work of other UN agencies. One example has been in the area of child protection where a joint programme with UNDP for the training of police was developed. UNICEF provided the content to ensure that issues related to violence against women and children were addressed in a protective and supportive environment.
- Other countries commented on an increase in the number of partners with whom they coordinate their programming. There was an increase in the sharing of information on general programme interventions and the development of several initiatives are implemented based on each agency's comparative advantage, particularly among UNICEF, WFP and WHO. In some cases it has increased the impact and scope of the interventions.

Some of the challenges with respect to obtaining benefits from the UNDAF were also well identified. These included deeply rooted individualistic practices, specific mandates, quality controls and competition for donors. These impeded the agencies from entering into effective joint negotiations with donors and were considered as damaging the perception of interagency collaboration. The coordination of programmatic efforts is difficult when different financial, human resource and supply system only serve to complicate implementation and coordination.

From the review, it was apparent that about six of 16 countries that sent completed questionnaires to the evaluation team found the UNDAF to be useful and beneficial for their programming. The other responding countries have not seen any significant benefits, although many were positive about the benefits of the UNDAF in bringing greater coherence to the overall UN program.

None of the countries reported that the UNDAF had prevented them from formulating a suitable Country Program, rather in most cases the UNDAF either enriched the UNICEF Country Program; allowed UNICEF to influence the UNDAF to reflect UNICEF priorities; or, in a few cases, appeared to generate a basis for joint programming efforts. Some countries noted that competition for funding among UN Agencies, different administrative procedures, and agency silo mentalities, are greatly limiting their ability to achieve greater joint programming objectives.

### **5.5.3 UN Reform and Preparation for Emergencies**

According to the responses received from the 16 countries responding to the Country questionnaire, UN Reform has only had an impact on UN emergency preparedness in a handful of countries. Most of these already had good UNCT disaster management teams, or theme groups. Four of the respondent countries reported no real activity in their country for emergencies related to UN Reform.

Six countries commented favourably on the role of the UNCT or inter-agency structures in preparations for emergency response. Disaster management teams seemed to function well. Individual countries noted the preparation of vulnerability profiles, the rapid fielding of joint missions to assess natural disasters and coordinated efforts to prepare flash appeals. Overall, from these countries there was a sense that UN agencies are looking at emergency preparedness and response issues much more closely and in a more coordinated manner. A few examples are provided below.

- A strong theme that emerged was that of UNICEF and WFP collaboration in emergency preparedness and response. Four COs reported joint emergency operations between UNICEF and WFP related to nutrition programming and the coordinated delivery of food and non-food assistance. This was a good model for taking full advantage of the agencies' comparative mandates and strengths.
- A few COs also mentioned the reliance of the UNCT on UNICEF to buttress emergency preparedness and response. In one country, UNICEF was requested by the RC to provide training to all resident agencies on emergency preparedness. Another country commented on a situation where, because of UNICEF's size and sectoral competencies, most of the work [emergency response] devolves to UNICEF.
- Four countries were uncertain about the impacts of UN reform on emergency preparedness and response. One country reported that although the process looks better coordinated on paper; it is more complex than ever. The paper preparations would not translate into a coordinated response in the event of a rapid emergency. In another country, there was criticism of the UNCTs unwillingness to move beyond a general plan towards more detailed scenario development.
- Only one country highlighted a difference in approach between UNICEF and other UNCT members. UNICEF reported using "assessment of vulnerability and exclusion" as a starting point where other members of the UNCT, particularly the RC, preferred to view situations in the larger, sometimes political, national context.
- Finally, one country noted that much of the work resulted from increased demands, particularly from OCHA and UNICEF, and that to some extent, they felt they had

to do double work -- one contingency plan for UNICEF, and another for the UN team.

- Five of the 16 respondent countries reported that the UNCT or inter-agency structures had no impact on emergency prepared and response. Individual countries noted that vulnerability analysis and emergency preparedness planning were undertaken by individual agencies, with none or little progress on UN preparedness, and that UNICEF was the only agency able to respond to a recent small scale emergency.
- Countries with a history of disasters have all improved their emergency planning through improved operations of UN teams, brought about through UN reform. One successful example of UN collaboration is the example of one African country, which managed to respond to an extensive drought emergency in their country during 2002/03 in spite of UNDAF. In this country, UNICEF's leadership, together with government, was able to raise and coordinate very significant emergency resources, especially with WFP with regard to 'food' and UNICEF with regard to 'non-food' items. This worked very well with the RC/HC. The key agencies met every week throughout this period. Although it is impossible to know whether this would have happened without UN reform, it did happen in a very impressive and effective way. UN reform may have helped to strengthen the resolve to work together in general.

#### **5.5.4 UN Reform and UNICEF HIV/AIDS Programming**

Of the 16 country offices responding to our questionnaire, only one indicated that the CCA/UNDAF had had an impact on strengthening UNICEF programming in HIV/AIDS. The most important aspect of UN Reform that has strengthened UNICEF's programming has been the existence of Theme Groups in at least 12 of the 16 countries. In at least five countries, UNICEF has recently been or continues to be the Chair of the theme group. At least two countries reported difficulties in coordination with UNAIDS.

The benefit of the Theme Groups has been that they provide a platform for information exchange and coordination. In one case the Theme Group was reported to have actively solicited funding from the Headquarters Fund for Aids, albeit unsuccessfully.

In summary, UN Reform has helped UNICEF in its programming of HIV/AIDS, primarily through the existence of theme groups and through the Country Team mechanisms. In both cases information exchanges and coordination supported UNICEF's initiatives.

#### **5.5.5 UN Reform and the development of UNICEF programming on Child Protection Issues**

The majority of the 16 country offices responding to our survey indicated that UN Reform has had a limited impact on UNICEF country office programming on Child Protection. In the countries where Child Protection issues are raised in the CCA and UNDAF, the country offices report that they are inserted in deference to UNICEF's mandate, and that there is an assumption that UNICEF will undertake programming in this area.

Some countries reported a more positive impact from UN Reform:

- UNICEF has led and coordinated the Action Plan for Children Affected by War in North East Africa to address the issue of child soldiers as well as other particularly vulnerable children

(IDP children, children engaged in other exploitative forms of child labor, etc.). This is proving to be a good vehicle for developing inter-agency support and implementation of multi-sectoral programmes on behalf of children and their families. UNDP, UNHCR and ILO have all contributed in a coordinated fashion to this multi-agency multi-sectoral programme (as have Save the Children, CARE, the Ministry of Social Welfare and the NGO Rehabilitation Organization). This is a good example of the UNCT working jointly on a key child protection issue and therefore a good example of UN reform helping the development of UNICEF programming on child protection issues.

- The UN system has been responsive to child protection issues. This area attracts donor interest. UN reform has helped UNICEF's capacity to program child protection activities, for example with relation to transfer of funds from UNDP to a project on adolescents in conflict with the law.

UNICEF collaborates with ILO/IPEC in sexual exploitation and trafficking of children; and with UNFPA/PAHO/UNDP on vital statistics and birth registration. The latter project is part of the UNDAF framework and is a good example of collaborative programming that takes advantage of comparative advantages.

In summary, there have been some positive examples of UN Reform assisting UNICEF pursue child protection issues. In most of the COs UN reform has not had a major impact in this area. Many of the other UN agencies still defer to UNICEF about child protection as it is clearly within UNICEF's mandate.

## **5.6 Assessment of Impact of UN Reform on the UNICEF mandate**

The subsections that follow provide an assessment of the impact of UN reform on UNICEF as indicated in the survey of the 16 country offices, which responded to our questionnaire.

### **5.6.1 Importance of UNICEF to UN Reform**

Twelve (12) of the 16 reporting countries believe that while UNICEF sometimes does not have the impact it seeks, in most instances the progress made in UN reform is significantly due to UNICEF's involvement (8 countries). Almost no UN reform issue is decided without significant UNICEF involvement, and UNICEF's point of view is usually very influential in making the decision (4 countries). The remainder had a less positive view of UNICEF's role.

UNICEF often plays a leadership role in UN reform issues in many countries; however, in many cases, only UNDP and UNICEF have the resources necessary to fully engage in all the multiple aspects of UN reform, even when other agencies are playing as active a role as they can.

### **5.6.2 Important Benefits to UNICEF**

Thirteen of 16 responding country offices identified what they consider benefits to UNICEF of UN Reform.

The COs noted that UN Reform permits UNICEF to exert more influence over the UN system in terms of the issues of importance to UNICEF such as the rights based approach, and child protection issues. They felt they are or will be in a position to engage much more in critical areas such as health and education sector development, gender and nutrition/food security.

Some offices also noted that UNICEF participation and influence on the CCA permits a stronger focus on issues related to children. UNICEF involvement in the CCA process has also promoted the introduction of DevInfo technology as the basis for the UN common database (BenInfo). UNICEF programme priorities benefit from the wider exposure gained from UN collaboration.

UNICEF has benefited from the CCA/UNDAF analysis. It has great potential to promote a rights based approach to planning and program implementation. It is necessary to promote this tool further among governments as an alternative to PRSP poverty analysis, etc. Indeed UNICEF COs note that the CCA and UNDAF have been discussed at the highest political levels (e.g. presidential level) which has enhanced both the visibility of UN coordination, UNICEF programming, issues affecting women and children and how the UN will jointly respond. Through its active involvement in both the CCA and UNDAF processes, UNICEF was seen as a team player by other agencies and government partners, thereby promoting greater collaboration. There is also a perception that coordinated advocacy with other agencies also benefits UNICEF by permitting the organization to promote its advocacy issues among other UN agencies.

Some noted that although there has been no real simplification of the programming process, there is an undeniable advantage in having this process harmonized with the ExCom agencies, especially in terms of the UN image of program coherence vis-à-vis the bilateral and government partners. This leads to a better appreciation of the activities of other agencies and a deeper understanding of their perception of problems and how to address them.

In summary, the majority (13 of 16) UN country offices responding to the questionnaire are of the opinion that there are benefits to UNICEF of UN reform.

### **5.6.3 Negative Impacts on UNICEF**

The 16 respondent country offices were most negative on the time and effort involved in UN Reform. This was a comment in a number of questionnaires received from COs, as well as in comments from the COARS. Another issue raised was the necessity of doing a lot of capacity building. This puts extra burdens on UNICEF staff.

Another CO noted that while the UN reform process has led to harmonization of UN work, the goal of simplification remains a challenge. The CCA/UNDAF process has been complex and time consuming but the result has been worthwhile. This, together with other internal processes, has consumed time that staff would have used for interactions with national partners and field visits. National partners have participated, of course, in the CCA/UNDAF discussions and, at times, there may have been a perception from outsiders that the UN is too preoccupied with internal processes and meetings to adequately and promptly respond to local needs.

Some country offices were of the opinion that UN reform is largely about process. Significant amounts of time are devoted to preparing documentation, which sometimes has little relevance to actual programmes.

Another concern raised by country offices as a negative of UN reform was a perceived blurring of the UNICEF image, and the reduced UNICEF visibility that can result because of the RC system.

In summary, the heavy commitment of time to meet its reform accountabilities coupled with concern that UNICEF's image and ability to dialogue directly with government may be lost pose some of the fundamental negatives in the minds of the country offices.

#### **5.6.4 Value Added to UNICEF**

The value added was the improved inter-agency dialogue and the ability of UNICEF to promote its agenda in an inter-agency forum. This was out-weighed in the minds of some by the heavy process and time commitment without tangible results occurring.

#### **5.6.5 Level of Change in UNICEF Culture and Practice**

UNICEF country offices indicated that so far very limited change has been required. A few country offices recognize that as UN Reform proceeds and as there are greater efforts to engage in joint programming and new resource transfer modalities; change may be more important and more pervasive.

Perhaps the most important change has been from a culture of 'UNICEF can act quickly and effectively without requiring collaboration with other agencies' to one of 'much more can be gained both in advocacy and programme implementation through joint work with UN agencies'.

The UNICEF change process has only recently begun and it is too early to evaluate it. Certainly more time is needed to work with UNCT in teams on different matters. For CCA/UNDAF to be meaningful they must dovetail with individual agency programming and this process will need to be worked out. UNICEF will also need to compromise on its resource transfer modalities to achieve a unified UNDG modality. It is too early to give a value judgment on these transformations.

In summary, responding country offices believe that to date the changes in the UN country office have not been significant. However, in the future there may be a need for a more significant change on the part of the country offices.

#### **5.6.6 Level of Commitment by the UNICEF Country Office**

The survey results from the 16 countries indicated a relatively high level of commitment to UN reform.

Many country offices consider UNICEF to be one of the two leading UN organizations (in both financial and human resources) in their country, and therefore consider that with UNDP they must play a leading role in UN reform. They felt that UNRC is collegiate and the level of UNCT cooperation is high.

UNICEF staff has taken, in some countries, the opportunities afforded by UN reform to advance the human rights agenda and child protection issues. For example, one country reported that several of the key UN reform gains and products over the last few years (CCA/UNDAF, Joint IDP Strategy, Needs Assessment of the Conflict Affected Areas, MOSS compliance, Transition Strategy, Action Plan for Children Affected by War) have occurred in significant part due to strong UNICEF involvement.

Therefore, it can be seen that although there have been some countries that have expressed concerns about UN Reform, UNICEF country office staff have for the most part pitched in and provided the technical and organizational leadership to help make the UN Reform effort work.

#### **5.6.7 Level of UNICEF Preparation**

Fifty percent of the 16 country offices noted that they were well or very well prepared to meet their responsibilities with respect to the RC system; whereas 50 percent considered themselves only moderately prepared.

With respect to Common Services, at least 80% thought they were only moderately prepared to deal with Common Services. Only 20% felt well prepared.

With respect to programming, it is not surprising that the vast majority thought that they were either reasonably or moderately well prepared.

Concerns underlying the feeling that offices may not be fully prepared to meet their commitments include: insufficient time, lack of trained staff, and insufficient funds allocated to inter-agency obligations.

#### **5.6.8 Systemic Gaps and Opportunities and Risks Identified by COs in Terms of Direction and Support from UNICEF**

##### ***Gaps in CO Resources or Capacities to Meet UN Reform Responsibilities***

This Section addresses the gaps inherent in CO resources or capacities in order to meet their UN reform responsibilities.

##### **Need for additional staff:**

UN reform should generate better outcomes with less total UN input. However, concerns were raised that this was not the case at present, as UN reform has put additional workloads on existing staff. UNICEF is already assigning substantial manpower at both headquarters and field level to participate in meetings, discussions, development of guidelines, etc. with little to show in return in terms of concrete benefits. However, UNICEF's contribution in terms of substance and quality for the UN system is still concrete and substantial.

##### **Increased training in UN reform:**

A number of countries mentioned that staff should be better trained and prepared for UN reform and that clearer and specific guidance from the Regional Office and UNICEF HQ will be required. Capacity building, enhanced analytical and policy, and guidance on positioning the UN vis-à-vis its comparative advantage as a family of multilateral development agencies were also mentioned by other countries.

##### **Strengthening of the Representative's office to better support the RC system:**

A number of countries raised concerns with the level of staff assigned to UN reform, noting that in many cases the RC unit was poorly equipped or staffed to perform the tasks linked to the reform. They mentioned the need for one full-time highly qualified senior person to coordinate involvement in the UN reform process, to participate in all coordinating meetings, to ensure follow up, and to make sure that all staff have information and can participate in UNICEF important opportunities opening up.

### **Streamlining and improving UNICEF's own guidelines:**

The need to streamline and improve UNICEF's own guidelines and to better mesh them with the newer processes brought about by UN reform as well as to establish clear UNICEF positions on UN Reform issues were mentioned by a number of countries. Certain areas needing more clarification include position on joint funding and joint programming, advocacy vis-à-vis donors to indicate that joint funding may not always be the best option, etc.

### ***Opportunities***

Country offices identified a number of potential opportunities that may evolve from UN Reform including:

#### **The ability to leverage additional resources as well as support from other UN agencies:**

Some countries felt, at least theoretically, UNICEF has the opportunity to enhance involvement and commitment of other agencies to support UNICEF priorities.

**The ability to increase country policy uptake and to shape national development plans and priorities** including increased focus on human rights/child rights and on child centred policies.

#### **Improved coordination among UN agencies as well as an increased capacity in results based management:**

UN reform can lead to the promotion of a long term vision for UN cooperation and allow agencies to evolve towards that vision; and it may also help other UN agencies to become more focused, results oriented, and more critical of their own performance. There is no doubt that major opportunities exist at country level for engaging all agencies in a coordinated way in addressing the problems faced by children and women and realizing their rights. This holds both in the areas of programme implementation and advocacy.

### ***Risks and Challenges***

A number of country offices identified risks and challenges that UNICEF faces due to the UN Reform efforts.

One risk to UNICEF is the **risk of taking on a coordination/leadership role at the country level without sufficient resources**. Strong leadership and coordination within UNICEF will perhaps be the most important factors in determining how well UNICEF will achieve its mandate in the future.

A few country offices expressed concern that the **RC System may not evolve well if it remains linked to UNDP as at the present**. Some country offices worry that UNDP **seems to be positioning itself as the champion/leader of UN reform** and is looking for a role as principal or sole direct UN interlocutor with the government and donors. One country noted that the disproportionate weight that the RC system carries does not 'pay off' in terms of efficiency in joint programming.

A number of CO respondents expressed concern that UNICEF, as well as other agencies may end up in **UN Agencies merged organizationally and as a result lose their distinctive organizational identity**. Concerns were expressed that the mandate may be watered down and that UNICEF will lose its identity as a children's rights organization. As a result, it may also suffer lost credibility on Child Rights issues and child protection in particular.

COs questioned **how to keep up and even leverage the levels of multilateral financial aid** in a headquarters environment of Headquarters Funds, bilateralism, direct budgetary support etc. as a result of UN Reforms/UNDAF.

Concerns were raised that without the **harmonization of administrative and financial procedures opportunities for real joint programming will never be met**. Challenges to UN reform mentioned included the following:

- Difficulties in managing joint programmes and possible deficiencies in maintaining real coordination. Positive attitudes and technical competence of UN staff toward joint work are both important. The mindset, which exists among UN staff of representing a single agency rather than the UN, needs to be addressed through more joint training and capacity building. The UN agencies at HQ level need to give further thought to the kinds of capacity-building exercises required to change these mindsets over and above the more technical, process-oriented training normally offered.
- Communication and public relations initiatives are required at country level to promote the image of "one UN".



## **6. KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

A summary of the key findings and conclusions reached during the evaluation will be addressed in the following manner:

- The Context to UN Reform;
- Accomplishments and Challenges of UN reform that pertain to UNICEF;
- The UNICEF role, commitment and leadership in mainstreaming UN reform;
- UNICEF's Contributions at the headquarters regional and country Level;
- Impact of UN reform on UNICEF – benefits and costs;
- The level of preparedness of UNICEF for the future; and
- The gaps that need to be filled.

### **6.1 The Context for UN Reform**

During the study many senior managers provided their views, sometimes conflicting, of the current context for UN reform. The UN has been going through a period of increasing budgetary pressure due to generally declining core funding for many of the UN development agencies. There is a general impression that, in the future, funding will be increasingly directed towards the IFIs, or retained by the bilateral development agencies for direct funding of headquarters and national development programs.

Other trends that were highlighted by senior UN managers during the course of this study, included:

- An increased concern about financial accountability by many of the bilateral donors;
- A belief by many bilateral donors that in spite of good progress in UN reform, the UN at the country level remains fragmented and that the UN agencies still have a “silo” mentality;
- Increasing concerns about transaction costs and efficiency. In fact, some believe that the bilateral donors (as well as the recipient countries) wish to deal with larger pools of funding, and that there will be an increased trend towards budgetary support;
- Increased pressure for national execution and national ownership;
- Focused spending by donors on specific issues and themes such as environment, HIV/AIDS, with special headquarters funds being set up that are available for recipient countries that can develop appropriate proposals; and
- A possible trend of the UN agencies to provide technical assistance and capacity development to countries in the formulation of their strategy development, planning and implementation of specific programs, with the substantive financial support coming from the bilateral donors and the IFIs.

Discussions with UN officials indicated that recipient countries are increasingly concerned about the continuing high transaction costs at the country level, which so far have not been adequately addressed by UN reform, as well as the lack of a tangible reduction in workloads from the simplification and harmonization processes. The fact that the UN is a relatively small source of funding for development activities also influences the thinking of recipient countries.

### **6.2 UNICEF Commitment and Leadership**

The study looked at the attitude, commitment and leadership in UN reform provided by UNICEF staff. As noted in the report, external UN officials were impressed with the extent to which UNICEF, which was initially reticent with respect to UN reform, has supported and participated in UN reform efforts. External officials noted however, that UNICEF has been reluctant to cross

certain boundaries, and still considers some areas non-negotiable. There is still concern on behalf of senior officials external to UNICEF that UNICEF is unwilling to participate in some of the reform efforts wholeheartedly. Interestingly, external observers feel that there are differences of opinion among UNICEF's senior management, and that while some support UN reform wholeheartedly, others are resisting reform efforts.

Internal and external staff strongly agreed on the important contributions made by UNICEF to the development of new undg processes and tools, particularly the UN's harmonized country programme process. As well, UNICEF's leadership in the human rights based approach, and its success in promoting the HRBA at the Stamford conference, which developed an agreed approach on Human Rights, is unquestioned. Its subsequent intellectual leadership at the country level with respect to inclusion of the HRBA into the CCA and UNDAF documents is strongly appreciated, especially by the UNHCHR, which sees UNICEF as an important ally in promoting human rights.

In addition, external observers point out that UNICEF is a key member of the undg ExCom, given its well-developed country office network, well-developed procedures, systems, and mandate. UNICEF has undoubtedly been successful in attracting funding from both individual as well as donor source. UNICEF is considered a good organizational mode with good results.

External observers also understand the dilemma and risks faced by UNICEF with respect to UN reform if it loses its visibility and dilutes its image of a professional, results oriented organization focused on its mandate of children. However, senior UN external staff believes that the entire UN system must show greater progress in UN reform, and UNICEF, as a key player, must play a leading role.

In this respect, external UN observers would like UNICEF to play a leadership role in further advancing UN reform. UNICEF is best suited to be the coordinator of the social sector, as well as maintaining its traditional leadership in emergency, humanitarian and transitional situations.

A number of both external and internal informants at UN headquarters in NY indicated a general perception that a broad commitment to the reform process has not, in the words of one senior UNICEF interviewee, "trickled-down to the country level in a meaningful way". However, the evaluation survey of 16 country offices indicated that although there has been a lack of clarity on UNICEF's long term strategic direction and long term commitment to UN reform from UNICEF headquarters, the country offices surveyed expressed relatively strong commitment to working with the UN country teams and working towards the goals of UN reform.

The study concluded that, after a hesitant start, UNICEF has been supportive of UN reform at the headquarters as well as the country level. The study concluded that UNICEF has shown hesitancy in some areas to fully engage in UN Reform, and was perceived as defensive on some issues, causing delays in some cases in implementing new structures. UNICEF has shown intellectual leadership and has contributed significantly to the development of the simplification and harmonization processes.

However, there is a strong perception that UNICEF has not provided sufficient leadership in the development of an overall strategy for moving forward in UN reform at the country level. Both UNICEF and external key informants attributed this to the apparent lack of a strategic vision for UN reform. Both internal and external key informants judged that UNICEF has not spent sufficient time or energy to develop a vision for what it wants from UN reform. With its non-

negotiables, UNICEF seems to have defined what it does not want from reform, but not the reverse.

A number of informants have urged UNICEF to take on a true leadership role and focus more on ideas and less on mechanics. Using its place as an innovator in terms of media and communications as well as field level support and implementation, UNICEF can play an even larger role in leading the reform drive and shaping it to ensure its own concerns are met. To do this, it needs to ask itself some difficult questions about what it wants and how far it will go.

**Recommendation:**

**UNICEF should develop a long-term vision and internal strategy for organizational change that will permit it to readjust its own organizational and business model to better fit with the vision of the UN of the future.**

**UNICEF should also conduct internal consultations to decide how it wants the organization to evolve to meet the goals of UN reform. This should feature efforts to map-out possible scenarios for UNICEF's ongoing engagement in reform.**

**UNICEF should also play a greater role in leading the UNDG in restructuring at both headquarters and country level to meet the goals of UN reform.**

The study concluded that UNICEF feels donors are pulling it in two directions. The first is the like-minded donors who appear to hold the pooling of resources as a litmus test for an agency's commitment to UN reform. The second group is UNICEF's largest donors who are reported to be placing less emphasis on reform issues, and have not linked their continued funding to UNICEF's reform performance. UNICEF appears to be looking on this apparent tug-of-war as a zero-sum game. A few external respondents commented that UNICEF could be meeting the needs of both groups. Funds from the like-minded donors could be sought for reform related initiatives without compromising UNICEF's fundraising with its largest donors.

At the same time, the intentions of the donors, particularly the like-minded donors, are far from clear. Donors are seen to be demanding greater pooling of funds and joint initiatives, and at the same time continuing to expect the same level of earmarking of resources, attribution of funds provided, and specific, results-oriented reports about agency achievements. There is a deep-seated concern that, even if agencies make a large-scale commitment to joint programmes using pooled funds, it may not result in greater long-term regular resource funding.

**Recommendations:**

**UNICEF should undertake consultations with key representatives of the like-minded group of donors to describe the Agency's concerns regarding the pooling of resources, and the potential trade-offs implicit in the approach.**

### **6.3 Mainstreaming**

The study reviewed the efforts made by UNICEF to mainstream UN reform. The analysis demonstrated that UNICEF has made a wide range of important efforts to help mainstream UN reform.

### ***Human Resources***

- UNICEF has contributed human resources through the secondments of staff to the UN system, 10 of whom are at senior levels with UN reform or inter-agency related positions;
- UNICEF along with other agencies made important contributions to the design of the new competency assessment system for selecting RCs, and UNICEF has nominated 22 staff to the Resident Coordinator system, four of whom are now resident coordinators;
- UNICEF staff have participated and provided leadership to a number of working groups;

### ***Mainstreaming of UN Reform***

- UNICEF has made contributions to the development or revision of a number of critical UNDG strategies and guidance notes related to strategic frameworks;
- UNICEF has also made a significant contribution to the development of the CCA-UNDAF guidelines, particularly with its promotion and understanding of causality analysis;
- UNICEF has played an instrumental role in promoting a human rights based approach in the inter-agency context. This was central to the UN's follow-up to Action Point 2 of the Agenda for Reform, introduced in 2002. In particular, UNICEF is credited with using its theoretical knowledge and field experience of using a child-rights programming approach as leverage;
- UNICEF actively lobbied for, promoted and supported the Second Inter-agency workshop (Stamford Workshop) on implementing a human rights-based approach in the context of UN reform;
- UNICEF staff has played and continue to play a role in developing training and learning materials for UN country teams. To date UNICEF has provided 13 and 11 percent of available resource persons and team builders respectively;
- UNICEF contributed to the design and rollout of the QSA system. As noted above, UNICEF has chaired the QSA group continuously since August of 2002, during the most intense period of QSA system development;
- There was agreement between UNICEF and external staff that UNICEF played an instrumental role in developing the concepts, tools and guidance for the UNDG's harmonized country programme process. In particular, UNICEF's contributions were noted for:
  - The Country Programme Action Plan, using the Master Plan of Operations (MPO) as a model of a results-based implementation agreement with partners;
  - The Monitoring & Evaluation Plan and UNDAF final evaluation plan;
  - The Joint Programming guidelines; and
  - The concept and initial design of Resource Transfer Modalities.
  - Leadership of the UNDG/ECHA inter-agency process to make more coherent the UN system's response to countries in transit from complex or chronic emergencies to regular development cooperation; and

### ***Communications and Guidance***

- A series of Executive Directives helped communicate the leadership's commitment to the reform process;
- UNICEF contributed to the development of joint UNDG letters and guidance notes, and distributed them widely;
- UNICEF's internal guidance for programme process and ProMS have been updated regularly to reflect new UNDG processes;
- The agendas for training and learning events, particularly for UNICEF's senior leaders, show a willingness to address UN reform challenges at country level;
- Consultation on matters related to UN reform has been conducted regularly via field reference groups and cross-divisional groups at headquarters;

- UNICEF COs have been asked regularly, via their COARs, to reflect and report on UN reform, what is working and what needs improvement; and
- While a wider communication strategy was not in evidence, there were efforts to communicate major developments to the field using a newsletter format.

Country offices generally noted that commitment to UN reform in principle is emphasized within both UNICEF country and regional level discussion. Concerns that were raised with respect to overall communications generally related to the strategic direction of UN Reform, or UNICEF's long-term direction. Furthermore, interviews in New York also emphasized the fact that communications within UNICEF have been through formal means such as ExDirs, or through the various fora and meetings. There is no ongoing information resource available on the intranet to update staff on progress in UN reform or forthcoming plans and intentions.

A number of country offices also noted that, compared to other UN Agencies, UNICEF has been in a far better position in terms of the timely release of guidelines and in making support mechanisms available. Some countries reported that UNICEF has integrated, more than other agencies, the CCA-UNDAF process into its programme and procedures manual.

In summary, the study concluded that UNICEF HQ-initiated communication and guidance is considered good; however, there are areas that need strengthening. Foremost is the need to provide a continuing source of information on UNICEF's strategic intent on UN reform so that country offices have a clearer picture of the direction UNICEF wants to take. A few offices would prefer receiving information on UN reform from UNICEF directly as opposed to receiving information from both UNDG as well as UNICEF.

**Recommendations:**

**UNICEF should ensure that a clear message on the long-term vision and strategy for UN Reform is made available to all UNICEF staff.**

**UNICEF should provide more frequent, less detailed bulletins and updates via the intranet, with an emphasis on how UN reform-related changes may affect UNICEF. Country and Regional offices need more information on strategic issues and options under consideration. These bulletins and updates should also communicate best practices and field level experiences.**

## **6.4 Contributions at the Country Level**

As reported above, there is broad agreement that UNICEF has been a major contributor at the headquarters level in efforts to mainstream UN reform.

Although there was some progress in developing a communications strategy, led by UNICEF, progress was slower than anticipated, due to the many conflicting demands on UNICEF staff. Communications was recognized as a weak part of the UNDG's reform efforts.

There was broad agreement among UNICEF and external respondents that UNICEF's intellectual and technical contributions have been critical to the progress achieved at headquarters level. At the same time, the evaluators concluded that the lion's share of UN reform-related work has been limited to a small group at headquarters. One UNICEF key

informant called this group the UN reform “engine room”. This approach has had positive and negative consequences. On the positive side, UNICEF was able to maintain a high level of continuity and focus while engaged in IA working groups. On the negative side, in-depth knowledge about UN reform and engagement with other UN agencies, particularly the ExComs, has been limited to a very small group of insiders.

**Recommendations:**

**UNICEF should maintain its level of technical commitment and involvement in UN reform working groups, but ensure that a greater number of staff at all levels are involved in the day-to-day work of reform. The evaluators recognise efforts to use headquarters and cross-divisional reference groups for consultation, but UNICEF may want to consider a broader working group.**

#### **6.4.1 Regional Level**

The evaluation concluded that UNICEF offices are among the best resourced of the UN agencies and are, therefore, among the best equipped to meet their UN reform requirements and to provide technical backup to the country teams. There is some frustration as to the regional office role and frustration of a lack of feedback to the regional personnel involved in the QSA process. Different locations (particularly headquarters versus field), different mandates and accountabilities, governance structures, different geographical boundaries, and local sensitivities to changing these boundaries, add to the complexity.

#### **6.4.2 Country Level**

The evaluation concluded that UNICEF offices have provided substantial support to the UNCTs and to the Resident Coordinator system.

- Four former UNICEF staff members are currently serving as Resident Coordinators and UNDP Resident Representatives in Lesotho, Poland, Botswana, and Namibia. However, UNICEF has had difficulty motivating staff to compete for positions.
- UNICEF staff has played and continue to play a role in developing training and learning materials for UN country teams, commensurate with other agencies. This is also allowing staff to play a role as resource persons and team builders for UNCT retreats and workshops, a significant investment in time.
- UNICEF country offices have made important contributions, such as service by UNICEF representatives as acting RC or Humanitarian Coordinator and financial support to the RC unit and funding of coordination officers in the RC unit.
- In 2003, 48 percent of the UNICEF country offices provided financial support to RC support units down from 62 percent in 2002.

The study concluded that the current number of UNICEF Resident Coordinators is relatively low. Since UNICEF is the leading agency in the social sector, greater numbers of UNICEF staff

moving into the resident coordinator system should enhance the capacities of UNCTs in country programming as well as the application of a human rights based approach.

**Recommendations:**

**UNICEF should review the impediments to UNICEF staff becoming RCs and endeavour through training and revised hiring practices to increase its ability to provide RCs to the system.**

**UNICEF should continue to promote the independence of the RC position vis-à-vis UNDP.**

***Importance of UNICEF to UN Reform***

The study found, based on a survey of country offices, that while UNICEF sometimes does not have the impact it seeks, in most instances the progress made in UN reform is significantly due to UNICEF's involvement or, almost no UN reform issue is decided without significant UNICEF involvement. UNICEF's point of view is usually very influential in making decisions. Country offices believe that they play a significant role in assisting the UNCTs push ahead with UN reform.

The study indicated that:

- UNICEF is often given a leadership position in UN reform issues in their countries;
- Only UNDP and UNICEF have the resources to to be active in all CO-level UN reform activities whereas other agencies often have to be much more selective;
- Significant progress in the UNCT often results because of UNICEF's involvement.

***The CCA and UNDAF Processes***

The study concluded that UNICEF provides leadership and technical support for the UNDAF in a number of country teams. The study concluded, however, that the CCA processes and results have been mixed. While results in the CEE/CIS region were good, other regions were more uneven, with some finding the process to be useful, but the resulting CCAs not sufficiently analytical or in-depth to be useful. A number of countries in the MENA region had difficulty with the process.

The study found that country offices consider the CCA and UNDAF processes to be quite time-consuming and without sufficient benefits attained yet. Furthermore, it appears that the CCA/UNDAF processes have been add-ons to the existing UNICEF planning processes, with insufficient streamlining of the existing UNICEF processes to cut down on the overall workload.

**Recommendation:**

**Given the importance of the CCA and UNDAF processes and heavy time and resource commitments, UNICEF should continue to seek ways of improving the usefulness and impact of these tools for UNICEF itself as well as for the country team. As the CCA and UNDAF are resource intensive, UNICEF should also intensively review its own processes to further streamline and integrate its processes and procedures with the newer UN reform related processes.**

***Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers***

Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers are a process driven by the IFIs and national governments. As PRSPs have emerged as an important process in many countries, UNCT involvement is important to ensure advocacy and positioning of the UN development programs within the framework of the national development strategies, which are increasingly captured in the PRSPs.

The evaluation found that UNICEF country offices played a role in PRSP activities in 56 percent of the COs where a PRSP process was in place (53% of all Countries). The emerging niche for the organization appears to be linked to its capacity for advocacy, provision of information on children, technical inputs in social sectors and its facilitation role in decentralized PRSP processes and working with civil society.

UNICEF country offices have noted the inconsistent approaches taken by the country teams in participating in and influencing the PRSP processes, citing the weak capacity of UNICEF in some countries to advocate for children in the PRSP process. UNICEF offices, although positive about some of the PRSP processes undertaken, expressed concerns about the tendency of PRSPs to be pre-occupied with macro economic issues and infrastructure development with insufficient attention paid to the social sectors.

One of UNICEF's strengths that are brought to bear on the process is its knowledge of the social sector and children in particular. Improving the entire country team's ability to advocate and influence the PRSP development process, with UNICEF providing leadership could be an important contribution to the UN system.

The evaluation concluded that, given the increasing importance of the PRSP process and the resulting planning document for government, it is important that UNICEF improve its ability to engage in the process. This may require a review of country staff capabilities in macroeconomics, and knowledge of World Bank processes.

**Recommendation:**

**UNICEF reviews its capacity to engage in the PRSP process in terms of guidance, training and human resources.**

### ***Human Rights Based Approach***

The study concluded that UNICEF has strongly promoted the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) in the CCA and UNDAF exercises. It is also apparent that this has posed a challenge to UNICEF country offices and has been resource intensive for the UNICEF country teams. Some UNCTs have found it difficult to articulate how to apply the HRBAP, and this has placed a further strain on UNICEF resources in helping to conceptualize and apply it.

### ***Joint Programming***

UNCT theme groups are an example of joint programming practice. UNICEF has been active in theme groups in most countries reviewed for this evaluation. The most useful theme groups have been in HIV/AIDS, and in some countries in emergency or disaster management, and occasionally in education and health. Country offices reported that theme groups take up a lot of their time, sometimes with mixed results. Country offices reported that theme groups help UNICEF promote its priorities such as human rights, and child protection, etc.

Overall, UNICEF offices perceive a great lack of clarity over how these joint programmes and projects work in practice. Major questions seem to be unresolved. For example: How does a project officer structure a joint project in ProMS? How is it done with existing earmarked (OR) funds vis-à-vis new OR? Which donors will support these joint projects and which will not, and under what conditions? How are funds actually allotted in financial systems and transferred? UNICEF staff suggests that there were limited efforts to develop these types of scenarios, and clarify operational aspects.

At the same time, there appears to be a high level of disagreement among UNICEF staff at all levels over how to attribute a joint programme and communicate the results in UNICEF's communication and fundraising efforts. The evaluators conclude that, from a communications and fundraising standpoint, there does not seem to be strong reason why a joint programme cannot also be "sold" as a UNICEF programme. But this issue needs greater clarity.

It is interesting to note that UNICEF has navigated similar issues vis-à-vis the National Committees. Recently, UNICEF called for National Committees to commit the lion's share of their funds to a pool. In return, UNICEF would provide thematic reporting packages, highlighting specific results, human-interest stories and photos for use with the giving public in the countries covered by the NatComs.

The logic of a joint programme is not dissimilar. A joint programme with a common pot need not necessarily be a risk for UNICEF, so long as there are guarantees that the interests of children are being addressed, that results-based reports are provided highlighting achievements, and that UNICEF has access to beneficiaries to be able to record and transmit their stories for future fundraising and advocacy efforts.

#### **Recommendation:**

**UNICEF should think strategically about its minimum requirements for joint programmes and projects and clarify operational aspects by developing, with field support, some standard scenarios in different country situations and with different resource profiles.**

### ***Common Premises and Services***

UNICEF participates in 46 of 58 “UN Houses” that have been established. There is only anecdotal information on UNICEF’s efforts in common services and a robust system for measuring the benefits of common premises and services has yet to emerge. Two of 16 countries reviewed indicated an effective UNCT effort in common services. The remainder did not report any significant activity.

## **6.5 Impact at the Country Level**

### ***Impacts of the CCA/UNDAF***

None of the countries reported that the UNDAF had either prevented them from formulating a suitable Country Program, rather in most cases the UNDAF either enriched the UNICEF Country Programme and allowed UNICEF to influence the UNDAF to reflect UNICEF priorities, or in a few cases appeared to generate a basis for joint programming efforts. Some countries noted that competition for funding among UN Agencies, different administrative procedures, and the UN agency “silo” mentality resulting in part from their differing mandates, governance processes, plans and expectations for results, are greatly limiting their ability to achieve greater joint programming objectives.

### ***UN Reform and Preparation for Emergencies***

Based on the responses received from the 16 countries responding to the Country questionnaire, the study concluded that UN Reform has only had an impact on UN emergency preparedness in a handful of countries, most of which already had good UNCT disaster management teams, or theme groups. Four of the respondent countries reported no real activity in their country for emergencies related to UN Reform.

### ***HIV/AIDS***

Of the 16 country offices surveyed, only one indicated that the CCA/UNDAF had had an impact on strengthening UNICEF programming in HIV/AIDS. The most important aspect of UN Reform that has strengthened UNICEF’s programming has been the existence of Theme Groups in at least 12 of the 16 countries. In at least five countries, UNICEF has recently been or continues to be the Chair of the theme group. At least two countries reported difficulties in coordination with UNAIDS.

### ***Child Protection***

The majority of the 16 country offices indicated that UN Reform has had a limited impact on UNICEF country office programming on Child Protection. In the countries where Child Protection issues have been raised in the CCA and UNDAF, the country offices report that they are inserted in deference to UNICEF’s mandate, and that there is an assumption that UNICEF will undertake programming in this area.

### ***Benefits to UNICEF of UN Reform***

An important issue for the evaluation was assessing benefits to UNICEF of UN reform. The study concluded, that most of the country offices benefited in some way from UN reform. Primarily, country offices noted that UN Reform permitted UNICEF to exert more influence over the UN system in terms of the issues of importance to UNICEF such as the rights based approach, and child protection issues. Some offices also noted that UNICEF’s participation and influence on the CCA permits a stronger focus on issues related to children.

UNICEF has benefited to some degree from the CCA/UNDAF analysis. It has great potential to promote a rights based approach to planning and program implementation. Indeed UNICEF COs note that the CCA and UNDAF have been discussed at the highest political levels (e.g. presidential level) which has enhanced both the visibility of UN coordination, UNICEF programming, issues affecting women and children and how the UN will jointly respond. Through its active involvement in both the CCA and UNDAF processes, UNICEF was seen as a team player by other agencies and government partners, thereby promoting greater collaboration both ways.

Finally, UN reform also improved the inter-agency dialogue and the ability of UNICEF to promote its agenda in an inter-agency forum.

### ***Negative Impacts***

However, the study also concluded that, the heavy commitment of time to meet UN reform accountabilities and the concern that UNICEF's image and ability to dialogue directly with government may be lost pose some of the fundamental negatives in the minds of the country offices. In addition, some voiced concerns that merging the UN image too much at country level may reduce UNICEF's ability to raise funds.

### ***Change in UNICEF culture and practice at the Country Office level.***

UNICEF country offices indicated that so far very limited change has been required. A few country offices recognize that as UN Reform proceeds and as there are greater efforts to engage in joint programming and new resource transfer modalities, change may become more important and more pervasive.

In summary, responding country offices believe that to date the changes in the UN country office have not been significant. However, in the future there may be a need for a more significant change on the part of the country offices.

### ***Level of Preparation***

Not surprisingly, UNICEF country offices feel best off in handling the UN Reform requirements with respect to programming. They feel less, although not badly prepared, to deal with the RC system. They feel somewhat under prepared to deal with Common Services.

Concerns underlying the feeling that offices may not be fully prepared to meet their commitments included:

- Insufficient availability of trained staff; and
- Insufficient funds allocated to interagency obligations.

### ***Identified Gaps***

A number of gaps were identified by UNICEF country offices, including the need for:

- Additional staff;
- Increased training in UN reform;
- The strengthening the Representative's office to better support the RC system;
- The further streamlining and improvement of UNICEF's own guidelines, better meshing them with the newer processes brought about by UN reform; and
- The establishment of clearer UNICEF positions on UN Reform issues.

**Recommendations:**

**UNICEF should review its staff requirements and capabilities given the evolving requirements of UN Reform.**

**UNICEF should ensure that staff, including the Representatives, has appropriate training to meet their UN reform requirements. This includes understanding the World Bank processes, as well as the PRSP requirements.**

**In addition, UNICEF should review the internal competencies required of senior country level staff, given the increased need to work with PRSPs, SWAPs and other processes, which have significant economic components.**

***Challenges***

There remain a number of challenges, however, for UNICEF's engaging in UN reform. These risks, which can only be addressed strategically, include:

- Taking on a coordination/leadership role at the country level without sufficient resources;
- The potential organizational merger with other UN Agencies, resulting in a loss of UNICEF's distinctive identity.
- Helping the RC role achieve greater independence, without generating tensions with other UN system members.

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## **ANNEX A: LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS**

### ***UNICEF:***

Dorothy Rozga (Representative, Ghana) (Telephone Interview)  
Kul Gautam (Deputy Executive Director)  
Karin Sham Poo (Deputy Executive Director)  
Ado Vaher (Director, UN Affairs)  
Joe Judd (Director, PD)  
Cecilia Lotse (Director, PFO)  
Ibrahima Fall (Director, DHR)  
Saad Houry (Director)  
Anupama Rao Singh (Deputy Director, PD/FSIAC)  
Terry Brown (Deputy Director)  
Louis-Georges Arsenault (Deputy Director)  
Rohini De Silva (Deputy Director, DHR Career Management)  
Nora Godwin (Chief)  
Mercedes Gervilla (Chief)  
Peter Mason (Senior Adviser)  
Youssef Abdel-Jelil (Senior Adviser, Finance)  
Detlef Palm (Sr. Programme Officer, DPP)  
Tad Palac (Sr. Programme Officer, PD/FSIAC)  
Enrico Delamonica (Project Officer, Policy Analysis)  
Haleem Lone (Project Officer, PD/FSIAC)  
Peter Built (Human Resources Officer)  
Antonino Brusa (Human Resources Officer)  
Ellen Yaffe (Comptroller)  
Rick Olson (Project Officer, HIV/AIDS)  
Hashi Roberts (Assistant Administrative Officer)  
Pascal Villeneuve (Chief, PD/Health)  
Mark Hereward (Regional Planning Officer)  
Mark Beatty (Chief)  
Eimar Barr (Senior Programme Officer)

### ***UNDP (DGO):***

Sally Fegan-Wyles (Director)  
Heidi Swindells (Retired Associate Director) (Telephone Interview)  
Mary Roodkowsky (Associate Director)  
Richard Olver (Associate Director)  
Steve Kraus (Policy Adviser)  
Douglas Passanisi (Policy Adviser)  
Ian Macfarlane (Policy Specialist)  
Clark Soriano (Policy Specialist)  
Vincent Kayijuka (Policy Specialist)

***UNDP:***

Mark Malloch Brown (Administrator)  
Zephrin Diabre (Deputy and Associate Administrator)  
Jan Mattsson (Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau of Management  
Ameerah Haq (Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director) (Telephone  
interview)  
Michael Constable (Programme Adviser)  
Luis Mendez (Sr. Coordinator for Common Services, UNDG)

***UNFPA:***

Thoraya Obaid (Executive Director)  
Imelda Henkin (Deputy for Management)  
Kunio Waki (Deputy Executive Director, Programmes)  
Arthur Erken (Special Assistant to the Deputy Executive Director)  
Doreen lobo (Administrative Specialist)

***WFP:***

Jean-Jacques Graisse (Sr. Deputy Executive Director for Operations)  
Peggy Nelson (Sr. Liaison Officer)

***OTHER:***

Marta Mauras (EOSG)  
Massimo D'Angelo (Chief, Development Co-operation Policy Branch, Department of  
Economic and Social Affairs)  
Goro Onojima (Human Rights Officer, UNOHCHR)  
Afshan Khan (Principal Adviser, Transitions, UNDGO)

## ANNEX B: LIST OF COUNTRIES SELECTED FOR ANALYSIS OF COARS AND E-QUESTIONNAIRE

Regions →: Roll-outs	ESAR	WCAR	ROSA	EAPRO	TACRO	MENA	CEE/CIS/ Baltic	TOTAL
<b>2003 COAR analysis</b>	Madagascar Zimbabwe			Philippines		Iran	Armenia Bosnia-Herzegovina Kyrgyzstan Romania Uzbekistan Azerbaijan	15
<b>2002 COAR analysis</b>	Kenya	Benin Niger	Pakistan		Ecuador			
<b>Focus for E- quest./ tele- conference</b>	Kenya	Benin	Pakistan	Philippines	Ecuador	Iran	Kyrgyzstan	
<b>2001 COAR analysis</b>	Botswana	Mali Cote D'Ivoire						23
<b>2000</b>	Eritrea Mozambique Ethiopia	Nigeria Togo	Nepal Sri Lanka	Laos Fiji	Nicaragua Panama Jamaica	Egypt Morocco Yemen	Moldova	
<b>1999</b>			Bangladesh	Cambodia Vietnam	Guatemala			
<b>Focus for E- quest./ tele- conference</b>	Mozambique	Mali	Sri Lanka	Vietnam	Nicaragua	Yemen	Moldova	
<b>TOTAL</b>	7	6	4	5	5	4	7	38

East and Southern African Region (ESAR); West and Central African Region (WCAR); South Asia (ROSA); East Asia and Pacific Region (EAPR); Americas and Caribbean Region (TACR); Middle East and North Africa (MENA); and East and Central Europe and the Baltic States (CEE/CIS-Baltic).



## **ANNEX C: QUESTIONNAIRES ON UNICEF & UN REFORM**

### **1. INTERNAL: GLOBAL & REGIONAL LEVEL**

#### **Purpose:**

- Assess UNICEF's contribution to UN reform and its impact on UNICEF;
- Identify strategic priorities for UNICEF investment for the next 2-4 years

**Uses: Feeding into- TCPR, MTR of MTSP, report to the board**

#### **Methodology:**

- Document reviews (esp, Sec Gen reports, TCPRs, EDARs, COARs, ROARs, UNDG reports)
- Key informant interviews
- CO questionnaire and interviews

#### **Question Set 1: Overall Assessment of Change**

**1.1 What is UNICEF's vision of UN reform? What does UNICEF want from the reform process?**

**1.2 Compared to what is expected, how well is the UN system performing?**

- Integration in national efforts and national ownership
- Simplification and harmonization of rules and procedures
- Resident coordinator system
- Programming processes and programming
- Common premises and shared services
- Monitoring and evaluation

#### **Question Set 2: Assessment of UNICEF performance in 2002-2003**

**2.1 How committed is UNICEF to "a cohesive, effective UN presence" at the:**

##### **Global**

- How committed has UNICEF's leadership (ExD; DexD) been to participate in UNDG structures?
- How effective was this contribution (ie. key decisions influenced, directions taken as a result of these interventions) and did it strengthen the overall reform drive?
- What kind of pressure was exerted by the Executive Board (ExB) to engage in UN reform – and was this positive or negative? How did it affect UNICEF's approach/ contributions?

##### **Regional**

- How committed has UNICEF's regional leadership been to participate regional IA structures?
- How effective were these contributions? (specific examples)
- Was QSA formal part of the RO workplan?
- How well did UNICEF's ROs take up their QSA responsibilities and how did they perform?
- What were the key problems encountered with implementing the QSA tasks?

##### **Country level**

- How committed are UNICEF Reps to the functioning of the UNCTs?
- Is there anything that discourages Reps and country offices from taking a proactive role in UNCTs?

## **2.2 What has been UNICEF's contribution to the Resident Coordinator system?**

- How did UNICEF contribute to the design and implementation of the RC assessment, training and selection processes
- How well has UNICEF done in identifying and selecting candidates for the RC system?
- How well have the UNICEF Resident Coordinators performed?

## **2.3 What has been UNICEF's contribution towards strengthening the UN country programming process? Anything particularly innovative?**

### ***HRBAP***

- How did UNICEF influence the UN's human-rights based vision and approach?

### ***PRSPs/ SIPS/ SWAPs***

- Has UNICEF been able to play a meaningful role in the development of PRSPs/ SIPS/ SWAPs, and to ensure that UNICEF objectives are reflected?
- Looking to the future, what strategic posture should UNICEF take?

### ***Development of CP processes and tools***

- What did UNICEF contribute to the development of common country programming processes and tools (CCA/UNDAF; RBM practice and results matrix, CPD, JSM, CPAP, AWP, SPR).
- What did UNICEF contribute to the UN's concept of joint programming and resource transfer modalities?
- Are these tools consistent with UNICEF's current practice?
- Have the adoption of these new processes and tools brought any tangible programme or institutional benefits to UNICEF?

### ***Transitional/ Humanitarian Situations***

- How did UNICEF influence the UN reform process to address countries moving from situations of humanitarian crisis to regular programming?
- How did UN reform (demands for greater IA cooperation, new tools and processes) affect UNICEF's overall strategy for responding to countries in transition?
- How has UN reform helped UNICEF promote its CCCs during emergencies?
- How has UN reform affected UNICEF's advocacy efforts for vulnerable children their families during emergencies?
- How has UN reform helped or hindered UNICEF's emergency preparedness and planning?

## **2.4 How did UNICEF contribute to the development of the QSA system and instruments? Did these pose any institutional challenges?**

## **2.5 To what extent has UNICEF made a contribution to CCA-UNDAF training materials and processes in terms of:**

- the time and resources committed by UNICEF for CCA-UNDAF training (materials and processes);
- the personnel provided to serve as RPs;
- the ability and willingness of UNICEF Field Offices to release programme staff for RP duties)

## **2.6 How committed is UNICEF to participate in IA country missions, and how important are UNICEF's contributions? Examples?**

## **2.7 How has UNICEF performed with respect to mainstreaming UN reform and inter-agency collaboration?**

**Leadership and Commitment:**

- How much is actual performance by Reps and other senior staff in reform issues and IA work taken into account when making appointments and promotions?
- During GMTs and RMTs is the organizational commitment to UN reform clearly stated and is there a willingness to discuss and debate UNICEF policy and practice
- What is the consequence? Are changes actually seen in policy and practice?

**Guidance:**

- How well are organizational policy and decisions expressed in internal communications, esp. ExDirs, PROs
- How useful has this official guidance been? If not, where have you received overall guidance for how UNICEF should approach the reform effort?
- How well have the MDGs been incorporated into policy and programme guidance?
- Have detailed programming guidelines been issued that reflect the new CP process and tools
- What compromises has UNICEF had to make and are there any outstanding gaps in the guidance?
- How has UNICEF adapted its RBM guidance and practice to the new harmonized RBM system?

**Adequacy of Training and Support:**

- How well have system-wide trainings (PPP; technical; Reps induction; SPOOPS) incorporated UN reform processes and tools?
- What has been achieved in terms of providing on-demand resources to answer RO and CO questions about UN reform?
- How actively have ROs (RD and planning officers) monitored CO commitment to UN reform and the progress of IA work, especially CCA-UNDAF preparation

**2.8 Is the overall perception of UNICEF's role in UN reform positive or negative at the global, regional, and country levels? In what way?**

**2.9 How important has UNICEF's contribution been to the UN reform progress achieved so far? (At the global, regional and national levels?)**

<b>Question Set 3: <i>Impact of UN reform on UNICEF programming at country level</i></b>
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**3.1 The CCA is meant to replace the SitAn report. In practice what have been the implications of this, and how does UNICEF's new concept of the SitAn as a process fit with the reform aims?**

**3.2 What is the real value of the CCA and how has it been used?**

(Is it central to programming or is it, in practice, more relevant to national buy-in; external communications and advocacy?)

**3.3 The UNDAF guidelines call for 3-5 UNDAF outcomes (collective priorities at country level).**

- How has this been reconciled in practice with UNICEF's 5 MTSP priorities? (possible conflict between corporate and system policy)
- What are the implications for UNICEF if reconciliation isn't possible?

**3.4 How has UN reform affected the process of developing a programme of cooperation with government? (ie. interagency coordination, programme coherence?)**

- How has UN reform affected UNICEF's ability to influence the UN system's response to the children and their families?
- How has it affected UNICEF's ability to support improved delivery of services for children and their families? (ie, national/ collective advocacy, greater area-based focus)

**3.5 How does UNICEF define national ownership?**

- Is UN reform compatible with UNICEF’s concept of national ownership and its application at country level?

### **3.6 How has UN reform affected UNICEF’s priorities for HIV/AIDS and child protection programmes?**

#### **Question Set 4: *Is UN reform compatible with UNICEF’s mission and mandate?***

#### **4.1 What have been the costs of UN reform?**

(e.g. additional time and resources, differing development priorities, and programming initiatives forgone)

#### **4.2 What have been the strategic benefits of UN reform and, in your opinion, were they worth the costs you just highlighted?**

(e.g. better UN positioning with government, stronger policy dialogue, more coherent UN programming and ability to combine resources)

#### **Question Set 5: *How well prepared is UNICEF to meet its UN Reform responsibilities for the period 2004-2007?***

#### **5.1 How would you characterise the internal “communication strategy” about UN reform so far? How should it be improved?**

- Sufficient communications been sent to personnel (visions, procedures and guidelines)?
- Communication more off-stage rather than on-stage?

#### **5.2 Are there sufficient human and financial resources in quantity and quality to deal with UN reform? What are the priorities for capacity building in UNICEF?**

#### **5.3 Has the UNICEF competency assessment system for representatives been updated to reflect UNICEF’s roles and responsibilities for UN reform?**

#### **5.4 Are Representatives sufficiently prepared to manage the “software” elements of UN reform?**

- IA negotiations re: mandate; trade-offs, non-negotiables)

#### **5.5 What are the main internal training gaps? (Who is not getting it, that needs it?)**

#### **5.6 Moving forward, for the next 3 to 5 years, what do you see as the major future pitfalls and opportunities for UNICEF from the ongoing reform effort?**

#### **5.8 What are the main lessons learned with respect to UN reform and UNICEF’s approach to inter-agency coordination and collaboration?**

#### **Ratings**

#### **Overall assessment (where 1 is none, 3 is some/ partial; 5 is high)**

- How would you rate UNICEF’s overall commitment to UN reform? (emotional)
- How would you rate the importance of the UNICEF’s contribution to UN reform? (substantive)

#### **On a 1 to 5 scale (where 1 is none, 3 is some/ partial; 5 is high)**

- Please rate the level of change that UN reform has had on UNICEF’s culture and practice?
- Please rate the value-added to UNICEF of its engagement in UN reform?

#### **On a 1 to 5 scale (5 is highest)**

- Please rate how well prepared UNICEF is to meet its UN reform responsibilities?

## 2. EXTERNAL: GLOBAL & REGIONAL LEVEL

### Question Set 1: *Overall Assessment of Change*

1.1 Compared to what was expected (TCPR 2001 recommendations), how well is the UN system performing.

1.2 What is <<agency's>> vision of UN reform and what results do you expect?

### Question Set 2: *Assessment of UNICEF performance in 2002-2003*

2.1 How committed is UNICEF to creating a more cohesive, effective UN presence (global, regional, country)?

2.2 What have been UNICEF's major contributions to the overall UN reform effort?

#### **Resident Coordinator system?**

- The design and implementation of the RC assessment, training and selection processes
- How well have the UNICEF Resident Coordinators performed?

#### **Strengthening the UN country programming process?**

- UN's human rights based vision and approach?
- Involvement in PRSPs/ SIPs/ SWAPs
- Contribution to the development of common country programming processes and tools (CCA/UNDAF; RBM practice and results matrix, CPD, JSM, CPAP, AWP, SPR).
- Involvement and contribution to joint programming

#### **Concept/ approach to Transitional/ Humanitarian Situations**

- How did UNICEF influence the UN reform process to address countries moving from situations of humanitarian crisis to regular programming?

#### **QSA system and instruments?**

2.3 Were any of these contributions particularly innovative? How?

2.4 How would you characterize UNICEF's support to, and participation in IA country support missions? Examples?

2.5 How has UNICEF performed with respect to mainstreaming UN reform and inter-agency collaboration internally?

- Leadership and commitment internally at all levels

2.6 Is the overall perception of UNICEF's role in UN reform and positive or negative at the global, regional, and country levels? In what way?

**Question Set 3: *Impact of UN reform on programming at the country level***

**3.1 What is the real value of the CCA and how has it been used?**

- Quality of analysis (particularly causality and rights-based analyses);
- Definition of priorities for UN support in the country?
- Centrality to programming or greater relevance to national buy-in, communications, advocacy?

**3.2 How useful was the UNDAF in terms of bringing about greater programme cohesion and focus to the development work of the UN system?**

**3.3 How has UN reform affected the process of developing a programme of cooperation with government?**

**Question Set 4: *Costs and Benefits of UN Reform***

**4.1 What have been the strategic benefits of UN reform and, in your opinion, were they worth the time and effort involved?**

(e.g. better UN positioning with government, stronger policy dialogue, more coherent UN programming and ability to combine resources; actual changes in people's lives...)

**4.2 What are the main lessons learned with respect to UN reform inter-agency coordination and collaboration?**

**4.3 Moving forward, for the next 3 to 5 years, what do you see as the major future pitfalls and opportunities from the ongoing reform effort? Please start with pitfalls, then opportunities.**

**Ratings**

**Overall assessment (where 1 is none, 3 is some/ partial; 5 is high)**

- How would you rate UNICEF's overall commitment to UN reform? (emotional)
- How would you rate the importance of the UNICEF's contribution to UN reform? (substantive)

**On a 1 to 5 scale (where 1 is none, 3 is some/ partial; 5 is high)**

- Please rate the level of change that UN reform has had on UNICEF's culture and practice?
- Please rate the value-added to UNICEF of its engagement in UN reform?

**On a 1 to 5 scale (5 is highest)**

- Please rate how well prepared UNICEF is to meet its UN reform responsibilities?

### **3. INTERNAL EVALUATION: COUNTRY LEVEL**

#### **Guidance and Support**

- 1. How clearly and consistently has UNICEF articulated an organizational point of view about where it wants to go with UN reform and the specific role that the country office is supposed to play? How well has this been communicated to CO's by UNICEF leadership and through documentation and guidance?**

(Please comment on how well the organizational commitment to UN reform is stated and discussed during RMTs and in other encounters between office leadership and regional and global senior UNICEF leadership. Please also comment on the timeliness, quality etc of any of the following: ExDirs, PROs, PPP manual, CCA-UNDAF guidelines, RBM guidelines. Special attention is asked to the issue of how well these guidance materials are rolled-out to country level.)

- 2. How well has UNICEF in particular and the UN system as a whole been able to meet your office's need for high quality, "on-demand" resources to support the programming portion of the reform process?**

(On-demand resources might include workshops for UNICEF or UNCT staff led by resource persons trained at the UN staff college; UNDG or UNICEF web-based resources or guidance notes; dedicated resource people at country, regional or HQ level to field questions and address concerns; and specific UNICEF or inter-agency country missions to address or monitor UN reform initiatives. Please pay special attention to what UNICEF could have done to fill the gaps in the UN system approach, and whether in fact the gaps have been filled. )

- 3. Please describe the quality of support provided by the Regional Office for UN reform issues. What are the major gaps, if any?**

(Some issues to reflect on are CCA-UNDAF preparation, development of the CPD and CPAP, theme group activities, support to the functioning of the RC system, especially where the UNICEF Representatives serves as RC a.i., and support for common services. Quality includes timeliness, comprehensiveness in the different parts of UN reform, depth of support, realism, etc.)

#### **Common Services**

- 4. What have been the overall benefits and negative results or unmet expectations of the common services portion of UN reform? Do you think that the opportunities that exist have been properly responded to?**

(The review of the Annual Reports has given a lot of detail on common services, but rarely shows any conclusions that the CO has drawn. For this question, please do not repeat what you have already put in the Annual Reports. Instead, please reflect on issues like: is the UN system saving money thanks to common services? If so, how much? Are there missed opportunities to save money or increase efficiency? Is the UN system agreed on the importance of the common service efforts? Have there been qualitative impacts on programming, such as increased enthusiasm for joint programming following a common premises move?).

## Resident Coordinator

- 5. Within the past 1-2 years, how much time has the UNICEF representative spent as RC ad interim (or as Humanitarian Coordinator ad interim)? What have been the positive and negative results of this experience, both in what UNICEF has learned and in what it has been able to contribute?**

(Please estimate what percentage of the time the UNICEF Representative has been the RC a.i.. This should include short periods like weekends or weeks when the RC is travelling, but a special focus should be on longer periods when a more complete set of management demands was made on the interim RC. Please comment on any opportunities this has opened up for UNICEF to shape the UN agenda, and also comment on how well the RC support systems in the country and at other levels has supported the UNICEF rep to carry out the RC a.i. duties)

## Impact on Programming

- 6. Please comment on whether the UNDAF, particularly the UNDAF outcomes to which agency efforts should contribute, has had any significant impact on the design of your country programme.**

(Issues of interest that you are invited to comment on are: a) if the agreement on UNICEF responsibilities within the UNDAF forced an adjustment into directions the CO would not have chosen; b) whether or not the UNDAF has in fact helped increase the number of partners coordinating their programming in order to benefit children and their families; and c) if other levels of UNICEF (e.g. RO, HQ) put pressure on you to include within the CP themes that the UNDAF did not include. Please be free to comment on any other items you think are important).

- 7. Have UN reform efforts had an impact on UNICEF's ability to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to emergencies or humanitarian issues in the country?**

a. Please comment on issues such as vulnerability analysis, early warning, emergency preparedness, and the actual response to any emergency situations that have occurred.

b. Of particular importance is how well the UNICEF and the UNCT have responded to emergencies that are specific to a certain area or group, even if the rest of the country is not affected. Following are some themes that, if present, should have engaged UNCT attention and response: natural disasters, economic meltdown, communal violence, rebellion, refugees and displaced, child soldiers, mines, and systematic sexual violence.

- 8. Please discuss how UN reform has helped or hindered the development of UNICEF's programming on HIV-AIDS in the country.**

(This question and Q. 9 are asked to solicit more detail about the impacts of UN reform in particular sectors. HIV-AIDS is selected as a sector where there has been much activity within the UN reform processes; Child protection is selected to see how UN reform is affecting a newer priority area. For HIV-AIDS, there is particular interest in whether the UN reform instruments (CCA., UNDAF, CPDs etc) are adding value over and above what is managed within the UNAIDS efforts.)

- 9. Please discuss how UN reform has helped or hindered the development of UNICEF's programming on Child Protection issues.**

(Of particular interest is whether the UN system has been responsive to child protection issues given that they are not easily visible in the MDG's)

## Overall Assessment

**10. In the past 1-5 years, where has UNICEF leadership in working groups/theme groups/etc helped or failed to attain inter-agency consensus on critical issues, or otherwise serve the interests of the UN system at the country level?**

(Critical issues include items like human rights based programming, good causality analysis for the CCA and UNDAF, focus on results, focus on the most vulnerable. UN system interests include topics like effective fund-raising or good work-planning).

10a. Where UNICEF achieved a significant impact:

10b. Where UNICEF tried to have a significant impact but did not succeed:

**11. Overall, how important has UNICEF been in achieving the UN reform gains seen in your country?**

(Select just one choice)

- 1 UNICEF has been almost irrelevant to the progress of UN reform in the country.
- 2 UNICEF has made important contributions in some areas, but more often UNICEF's role or point of view is not relevant to the final outcome.
- 3 In about half of the UN reform issues, UNICEF has been a critical partner in the progress made; in the other half, UNICEF has not been an important partner.
- 4 While UNICEF sometimes does not have the impact it seeks, in most instances the progress made is significantly due to UNICEF's involvement.
- 5 Almost no UN reform issue is decided without significant UNICEF involvement, and UNICEF's point of view is usually very influential in making the decision.

Please add any comments you think are needed to help explain your rating.

**12. What have been the most important benefits to UNICEF of it's engagement in UN reform processes in your country?**

(Please be as specific as possible. Possible issues that can be commented on include: UNICEF's influence within the UNCT; transaction costs (meetings etc) among agencies; transaction costs with the host country; coordinated advocacy; better overall leadership of the entire UN effort; the influence and working relationships with government or civil society; and any tangible gains for children and their families. Your answers to earlier questions may be referred to avoid repeating items.)

**13. What have been the negative results to UNICEF of UN reform?**

(Many of the same issues noted in the prior question may be commented on here. When developing an answer, please make sure to consider the opportunity costs (i.e. things that could not be done because of the time or money invested in UN reform processes or because of UN reform rules).

**14. Please rate the overall value-added to UNICEF's ability to fulfill its mission and mandate in your country from its engagement in UN reform?**

(Select just one choice)

1. Almost no value added, with major negative impacts
2. Some major value added, but the negative impacts are more important
3. The positives and negatives are about evenly balanced
4. Some major negatives, but the positive value added is more important
5. Almost no negative impacts, with major value added

Please add any comments you think are needed to help explain your rating.

**15. Please rate how much UNICEF’s culture and practice have had to change in order to become an effective partner in UN reform.**

1 (high levels of change) 2 3 4 5 (Almost no change has been needed)

Please add any comments you think are needed to help explain your rating.

**Future Perspective**

**16. How would you rate the overall level of commitment shown by the/your UNICEF CO to UN reform issues in your country?**

1 (Very weak) 2 3 4 5 (Very high)

Please add any comments you think are needed to help explain your rating. Also, please offer specific examples of feedback that the CO has received from other UN partners about UNICEF’s level of commitment, whether good or bad.

**17. Please rate how well prepared your UNICEF CO is to meet its UN reform responsibilities in the next 1-3 years?**

(Preparation means a combination of factors, including having trained staff with time available; having the funds to meet inter-agency obligations; having a strategic vision of what you want to accomplish etc.)

Please rate for each item using this 1-5 scale:

	1	2	3	4	5
	(very deficient)			(completely)	
17a. RC System :	1	2	3	4	5
17b. Common Services	1	2	3	4	5
17c. Programming	1	2	3	4	5

**18. What additional resources (e.g. skills, knowledge, guidance, person-power) does your office need to be properly equipped for more effective engagement in the UN reform processes in the next 1-3 years?**

Please be as specific as possible.

**19. What do you see as the major opportunities, risks, and challenges from the ongoing reform effort for achieving the mission and mandate of UNICEF in your country over the next 3-5 years?**

(While the focus of the answer should be on your country environment, please also feel free to comment on opportunities etc that you perceive for UNICEF globally).

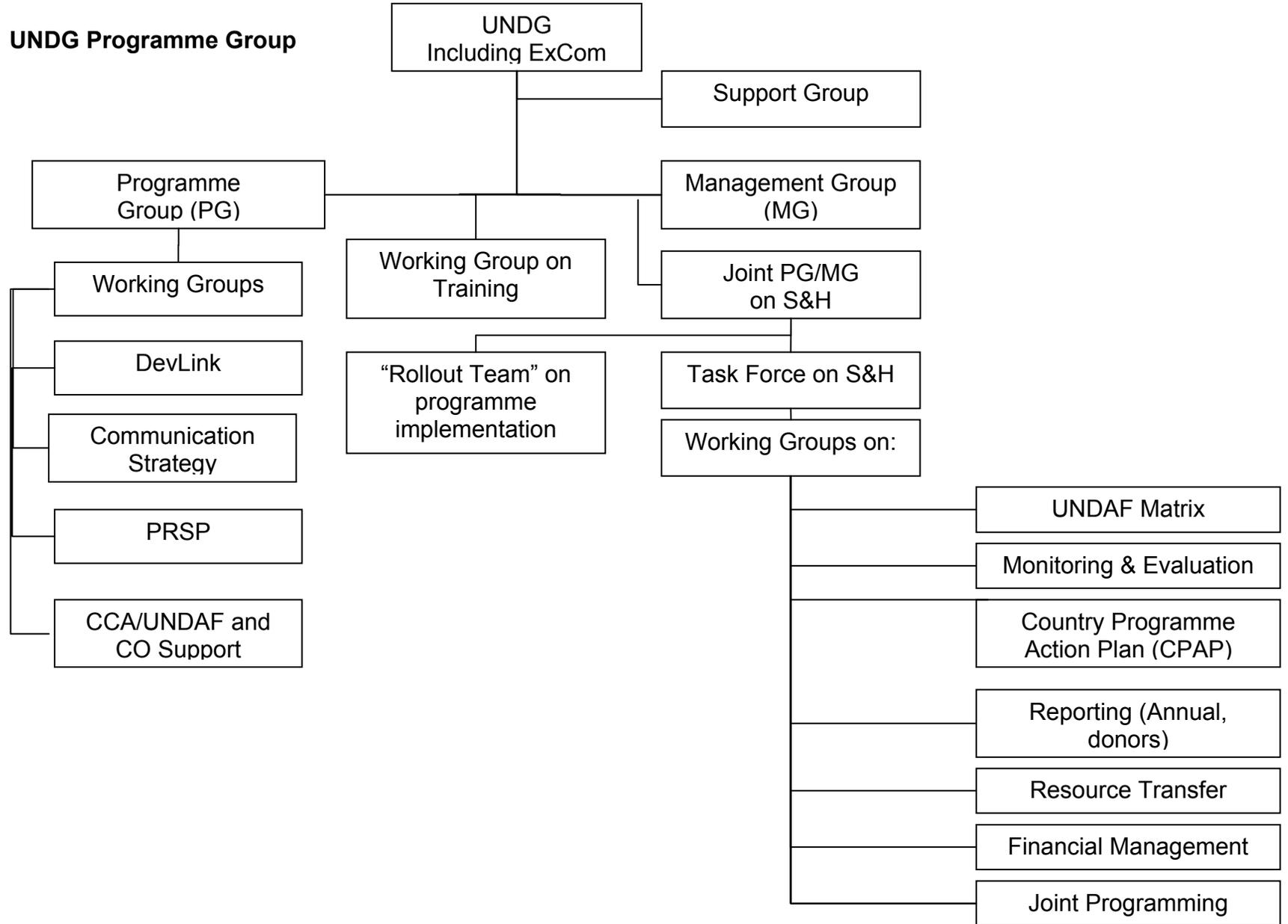
**Other Comments**

**20. Please add comments on any other topic you consider important for an evaluation of UNICEF and UN reform to consider.**

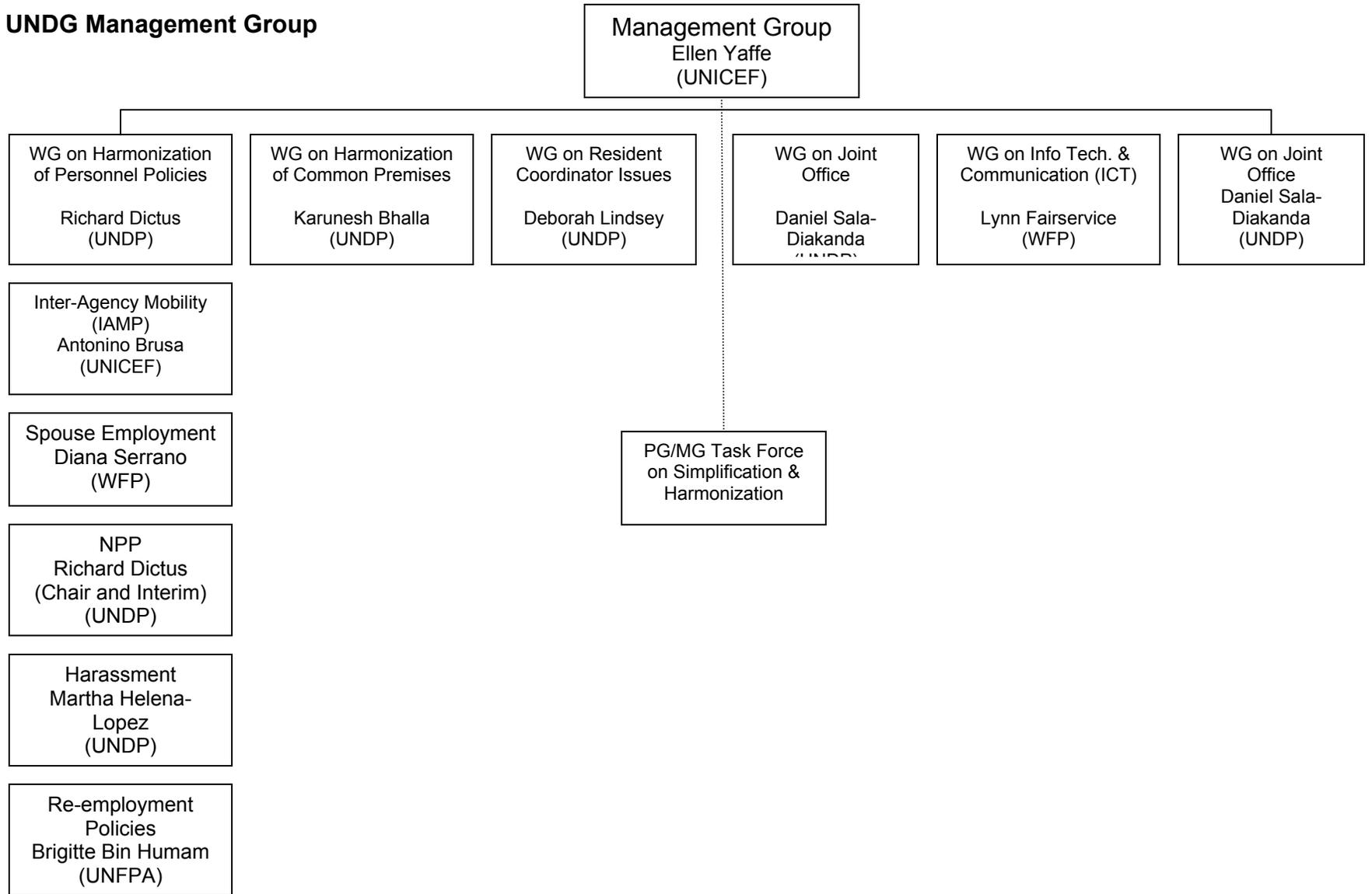
**Transmission:** Please send the completed questionnaire via e-mail to Ms. Adjowii Ozdemir by close of business on 22 March 2004.

Your contribution to this important evaluation are deeply appreciated.

**ANNEX D: ORGANOGRAMS OF THE UNDG PROGRAMME GROUP AND MANAGEMENT GROUP (APRIL 2004)**



# UNDG Management Group



## ANNEX E: UNICEF CHAIRS OR VICE-CHAIRS OF UNDG SUB-GROUPS, 1999 TO PRESENT

	Key group / subgroup	Chair / Vice-chair
	<b>2003-4</b>	
I.	Programme Group	Joe Judd / Tad Palac
	Sub-group on Communication Strategy	Joe Judd/ Tad Palac
	Standing Committee on Quality Support and Assurance	Detlef Palm
II.	Management Group	Ellen Yaffe
	Working group on Harmonisation of Personnel Policies	
	WG on inter-agency mobility	Antonino Brusa
	Working group on Common Premises and Services	
III.	Joint PG/MG WG on Harmonisation and Simplification	
IV	Roll-out Team on S&H implementation	Tad Palac
IV.	WG on Resource Transfer Modalities	Youssef Abdel-Jelil
	<b>2002</b>	
I.	Programme Group	Joe Judd / Tad Palac
	Sub-group on Communications / MDGs	Marjorie Newman-Williams
	Task force on Quality Support and Assurance	Detlef Palm
II.	Management Group	(Imelda Henkin, UNFPA)
	Working group on Harmonisation of Personnel Policies	Rohini de Silva
	Working group on Common Premises and Services	Steven Bloom
	Ad-Hoc Group on Lumpsum	Ellen Yaffe
III.	Joint PG/MG WG on Harmonisation and Simplification	(Ces Adorna)
IV.	UNDG/CEB WG on Training	Nora Godwin
V.	Inter-Agency Advisory Panel on Selection of Resident Coordinators	(Sally Fegan-Wyles, DGO)
	<b>2001</b>	
I.	Programme Group	[Chair: Kunio Waki (UNFPA) Vice-chair: Christopher Ronald (UNDP)]
	Ad-Hoc group on follow-up to UNDAF External Assessment and the Princeton II Workshop	Vice-chair: Tad Palac
	Working group on Girls Education	Chair: Mary Joy Pigozzi
II.	Management Group	[Chair: Jan Mattsson (UNDP)]
	Sub-group on Common Premises and Services	Chair: Steven Bloom
	Ad-Hoc Group on Inter Agency Mobility Programme (IAMP) and its WG	Chair: Rohini D'Silva

	<b>Key group / subgroup</b>	<b>Chair / Vice-chair</b>
III.	RC Issues	Chair: Anupama Rao Singh
IV.	UNDG/ACC Working Group on Training	Chair: Nora Godwin
	<b>2000</b>	
	Programme Network	Eimar Barr
	RC Issues	[Dyane Dufresne Klaus, WFP]
	UNDG/CCPOQ Training	[Rosina Wiltshire, UNDP]
	Management Group on Premises and Services	[Ellen Yaffe]
	Ad-Hoc Group on Harmonisation and Simplification	[Henna Ong, UNFPA] [Herbert M'Cleod, UNDP] [Peter Van Laere, UNOPS]
	Ad-Hoc Group on Inter-Agency Mobility Programme	Rohini de Silva
	<b>1999</b>	
	Sub-group on gender	Vice chair: Joan French
	Sub-group of programme operations	Vice chair: Tad Palac
	Management group on Services and Premises	Vice chair: Ellen Yaffe
	Sub group on common premises and services	[Chair: Karunesh Bhalla, UNDP]
	Sub group on training and personnel, Working group on training	Chair: Thomas McDermott Chair WG: Sandra Haji-Ahmed
	Sub-group on programme policies	Chair: Mr. Omawale
	Sub group on information	[Chair: Catherine Pierce, UNFPA]
	Sub group on RC issues	Chair: Alan Doss, UNDP
	Ad-Hoc working group on right to development	Vice-chair: Marta Santos-Pais

The list of chairs and vice chairs gives only part of the picture since UNICEF participated actively in all groups. It also of course excludes the regular participation in the 'routine' support mechanisms such as the Support Group and the UNDG itself.

## **ANNEX F: REFORM RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

### **Reform Recommendations and Achievements**

This evaluation is focused mainly on UNICEF's contribution to UN reform and how reform has affected UNICEF. The evaluators were also requested to provide an overall assessment of UN system change since 1997, with a focus on 2002-2003. This is a large and complex task, made problematic by the parallel implementation of the 2004 TCPR with a similar mandate, but with far more resources. In order to delimit this aspect of the evaluation, the evaluators opted to focus on that area of UN reform with the most relevance to UNICEF and to the other funds and programmes. This is development cooperation and field level coordination.

The following table summarizes the main recommendations emerging from the TCPR related to development cooperation and field level coordination. Specific recommendations from the Agenda for Further Change report have been integrated into this table at appropriate places. These concern: Action 2 – strengthening human rights related action at country level and Action 14 – country level coordination. For each recommendation, a summary of the major system achievements is presented.

These achievements have been summarized by the evaluators from a number of key documents: (1) Progress in the Implementation of General Assembly resolution 56/201, Report of the Secretary General, E/2003/61, 09 May 2003; (2) Report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: Annual Report to the Economic and Social Council, UNICEF, Economic and Social Council, E/ICEF/2004/4; (3) Annual Progress Reports from the Programme Group and Management Group for 2003 and 2002. Generally, the achievements summarized here, except where noted, were confirmed by internal and external interviewees.

Recommendations	Reference	Achievements <sup>44</sup>
<p><b>1.0 Strategic Frameworks:</b></p> <p>Integration in national efforts and national ownership with a focus on strategic frameworks</p>	<p>TCR IV; VI Rec. 5, 7, 8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The UNDAF provides a system-wide response to the development strategy of the government, as summarized in the PRSP”<sup>45</sup> Major efforts undertaken to strengthen the focus of the CCA and UNDAF on the MDGs, national development plans and frameworks, including PRSPs, and ratified UN conferences and summits.</li> <li>• The CCA and UNDAF guidelines now promote a results-based approach. A results matrix which sits as the core of the UNDAF document, uses harmonized results terminology and establishes a concrete link between the national priorities, the collective results of the UN system and the results expected of individual agency programmes and projects. The results matrix is also expected to be used as a dynamic management tool by the UNCT to monitor and evaluation progress.</li> <li>• To date, United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) have developed 115 CCAs and 82 UNDAFs. The UNDG has introduced guidance notes to country teams to support PRSPs and MDGs in 2001 and 2002 respectively. The PRSP Guidance note was updated in December 2003 to reflect ongoing experiences and lessons learned from UNCT engagement with the PRSP process.</li> <li>• There is a renewed focus on National Capacity Building. In 2000, a set of principles was adopted to provide an initial framework for the system’s capacity building efforts (Guidance Note on capacity building (ACC/2000/7 annex V). During the meeting of the High Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) in Geneva in March of 2003, it was agreed that each agency would define its own corporate strategy for capacity development and assess its results in annual reports. Efforts have also been initiated to develop indicators and benchmarks to design, manage and monitor capacity building initiatives.</li> </ul>
<p>1.1. Strengthen human rights related actions at country level</p>	<p>Agenda for Change; Action 2</p>	<p>An inter-agency conference was convened in Stamford from 5-7 May, 2003, resulting in a consensus for the UN system on its approach to human rights based programming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Action Plan was prepared by OHCHR and endorsed by the MG</li> <li>• A joint UNDG/ECHA Working Group was established to draft an implementation plan</li> <li>• The terminology of a human rights-based approach has been integrated into the CA-UNDAF guidelines and is being promoted through inter-agency trainings and workshops.</li> </ul>
<p>1.2 Develop a coherent strategy for training, learning and support for UN country teams on CCA, UNDAFs, MDGs and related areas</p>		<p>A system of 3 linked workshops and retreats for UN Country teams introduced to roll-out the harmonized country programming process. The events are: (1) an orientation workshop at the start of the preparation process; (2) a prioritization retreat following completion of the CCA, and as a start for the UNDAF; (3) A workshop to familiarize UNCTs with the harmonized country programming tools used to develop agency programmes and projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 UN Country Programming Workshops</li> <li>• 15 Prioritization Retreats conducted with UNCTs, their Government and other national counterparts</li> </ul>

<sup>44</sup> Achievements have been summarized from: (1) Progress in the Implementation of General Assembly resolution 56/201, Report of the Secretary General, E/2003/61, 09 May 2003; (2) Report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: Annual Report to the Economic and Social Council, UNICEF, Economic and Social Council, E/ICEF/2004/4; (3) Annual Progress Reports from the Programme Group and Management Group for 2003 and 2002. Other major sources are footnoted where relevant.

<sup>45</sup> Progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 56/201, Report of the Secretary General, E/2003/61, 09 May 2003, 6.

Recommendations	Reference	Achievements <sup>44</sup>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 Train the Trainers workshops conducted for nominated facilitators and resources persons</li> <li>• A network established of 181 trained resource persons and 36 teambuilders from UN agencies and 16 Professional Facilitators. The network is managed by the UN System Staff College on behalf of the UNDG Working Group on Training</li> </ul>
1.3 Quality Support and Assurance (QSA)		<p>UNDG has developed and is implementing a comprehensive system for quality support and assurance (QSA) for UN country teams for the harmonized country programme process, with specific emphasis on the CCA and UNDAF</p> <p>The QSA support group and UNDGO have monitored the rollout of 18 CCAs and UNDAFs including progress on key milestones, training activities at regional and county levels, and role of regional structures in QSA.</p>
<b>2.0 Simplification and harmonization of rules and procedures including joint programming and resource transfer modalities</b>	TCPR VIII A. Rec. 11  Agenda for Change; Action 14	<p>There is a simplified and harmonized country programming process developed and approved by the UNDG. There are updated CCA-UNDAF guidelines, and some of the elements below have more detailed complementary guidelines. Some elements are only mandatory for the four Executive Committee agencies, and these are noted. In sequence the steps are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CCA</li> <li>2. UNDAF, including a results Matrix using harmonized results based management terminology and a M&amp;E plan</li> <li>3. The Country Programme Document (ExCom)</li> <li>4. Joint Strategy Meeting(s)</li> <li>5. A Country Programme Action Plan (ExCom)</li> <li>6. Annual Work Plan (ExCom)</li> <li>7. A guidance note on Joint Programming; and</li> <li>8. A standard Progress Report (ExCom)</li> </ol> <p>A final element, still under development, concerns Resource Transfer Modalities: a standardized approach for transferring resources among agencies and to partners for implementation, and accounting for their use.</p>
2.1 Close the funding and strategic planning gap between relief and development activities during disasters and complex emergencies	Agenda for Change; Action 14	An inter-agency working group examined transition issues and reached a common understanding about transition, recovery, peace-building, and reintegration. A report was issued that aims to foster a coherent and integrated UN system response to transition settings <sup>46</sup> .
2.2 UNDG Communication Strategy	Agenda for Change; Action 14	<p>There is a draft UNDG Communication Strategy for implementation of activities by all partners at various levels.</p> <p>There is an integrated, regularly updated UNDG website that provides access to all relevant guidance materials, training information, and a data base of country resources and examples. The address is <a href="http://www.undg.org">www.undg.org</a></p>
2.3 Simplification and harmonization of personnel policies		<p>Major achievements include an IA mobility programme, a spousal employment policy, a guidance note on procedures for National project personnel, and ongoing efforts to develop a common policy on re-employment of separated staff. Specific achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IA Mobility</li> <li>• Website developed with 6 agencies (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, UNAIDS and UNOPS) to share internal vacancies and monitor recruitment progress (<a href="http://www.iamp.undg.org">www.iamp.undg.org</a>).</li> </ul>

<sup>46</sup> Report of the UNDG/ECHA Working Group on Transition Issues, UNDG/ECHA Working Group, December 2003.

Recommendations	Reference	Achievements <sup>44</sup>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The “soft” launch took place in November 2003 and publicized through a communication strategy in early 2004; the site has received over 600 hits by 450 registered staff and agency focal points.</li> <li>• Guidance note on procedures for National Project Personnel</li> <li>• Elements for Guidance Note prepared, comparing DSA rates, recruitment and remuneration. The group found there was no uniform definition of National Project Personnel (NPP)</li> </ul>
<b>3.0 Resident coordinator system</b>	TCPR VIII B. Rec. 12	<p>The role of the resident coordinator system is being enhanced by upgrading the skills and capabilities available to the country team, as well as through in-country training efforts.</p> <p>Specific achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updating of the resident coordinator competency assessment system to address the coordination, teambuilding and teamwork demands of the RC role at country level</li> <li>• New TORs for Humanitarian Coordinator agreed and incorporated into RC appraisal form</li> <li>• Agreement by UNDG to assess the performance of the RC and UN country teams on the basis the RC annual and their contribution to UN system work at country level.</li> <li>• Agreement by UNDG to adopt a Multi-rater 180 degree Appraisal Questionnaire be used for both RC and whole UNCT</li> <li>• A total of 162 candidates have completed the RC Competency Assessment and improvements in gender and North-South ratio continue: as of Sept 2003, 51 males and 36 females undertook the RCAC, 36 from the North and 48 from the South .</li> <li>• At present nearly 1/3 of incumbent RCs are women.</li> <li>• Of 120 incumbent RCs, 17 or 13% are from agencies other than UNDP. Four of these 17 are from UNICEF.</li> </ul>
<b>4.0 Common premises and shared services, emphasising the principles of (1) cost-effectiveness; (2) safety; (3) security; (4) functionality.</b>	TCPR VIII C. Rec. 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 57 UN houses established with 5 added in 2003: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mauritania, Niger, Suriname, and Romania.</li> <li>• A web-based Transaction Module with a step-by-step approach and standard documents for establishing common premises and services established. Over 10,000 documents stored in central CSP database. 15,000 total hits since Jan 03. (Databank: 12,300 hits / Transaction Model: 2,700)</li> <li>• In 2003 a pilot programme in 8 countries was completed and these experiences and lessons contributed to a new Common Services Expansion Programme endorsed by the MG in December 2003</li> <li>• The new CSP Programme includes a tool kit available to <u>all</u> country teams including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <u>Improved Practical Guidelines</u> on implementation, governance and management of common services,</li> <li>○ <u>A Results Tracking System</u> to evaluate the impact of common services within a country and globally,</li> <li>○ <u>A Web-Based Knowledge Support System</u> including a technical expert roster and country examples,</li> <li>○ <u>Capacity Building And Training</u> in common services implementation, including feasibility plans, performance measurement, inter-agency procurement, contract administration and conflict resolution</li> <li>○ <u>Financial Grants/Seed Money</u> to assist country teams in CSP implementation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A baseline for CSP was initiated with electronic surveys to 100 countries. The baseline will establish the current status of common services implementation current cost savings, and any perceived or actual efficiencies. A pilot test of the Joint Office concept initiated in 2 countries: Cape Verde and The Maldives. These will test the feasibility of rationalizing the UN presence in countries where there are a limited number of agencies and reduce transaction costs.</li> </ul>

Recommendations	Reference	Achievements <sup>44</sup>
<b>5.0 Monitoring and evaluation</b>	TCPR VIII D. Rec. 14	<p>The CCA and UNDAF guidelines now include a monitoring and evaluation plan. The M&amp;E plan provides an overall structure for how UN agencies will, collectively, monitor and evaluate the results expressed in the Results Matrix. It provides a summary of key indicators and sources of information about UN-supported results. The M&amp;E plan also includes a final UNDAF evaluation, usually conducted in year 4 of a typical 5-year UNDAF cycle. It is a joint review, undertaken by UN agencies and stakeholders, including beneficiaries and donors, of the results of the five-year UNDAF.</p> <p>An assessment was conducted to determine how well UN agencies at field level have learned lessons from their evaluations. The report proposes mechanisms for improving feedback at field level.</p>
<b>6.0 Involvement of specialized agencies</b>	TCPR VIII E. Rec.15	<p>The TCPR recommended that the UN Funds and Programmes be encouraged to collaborate more intensively with the specialised and technical agencies to improve the design and delivery of development cooperation activities. There were either no substantive results reported in the Agenda for Change report in 2002 or the Progress report of May 2003.</p>
<b>7.0 Cooperation with International Financial Institutions (IFIs)</b>	TCPR VIII F. Rec 16	<p>IFIs, particularly the World Bank are recasting their priorities and strategies to reflect the MD and MDGs especially poverty reduction.</p> <p>“Continuous dialogue” between the IFIs, the UN and donors is underway to ensure a progressive alignment of country level programming processes.<sup>47</sup></p> <p>UNDG conducted an assessment of the role and experiences of UN Agencies in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. This led to revisions of the Guidance Note on UN Country Team Engagement in PRSPs completed in December 2003.<sup>48</sup></p>
<b>8.0 Humanitarian assistance and operational activities for development; the need measures to enhance the interaction and complementarity between humanitarian assistance and operational activities.</b>	TCPR IX A. Rec. 17	<p>The Secretary General reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An increased awareness among humanitarian and development agencies of the need to tailor emergency assistance to support recovery and development efforts; and</li> <li>• A recognition of the need for an integrated approach among all donors and agencies to ensure effective field level coordination during transition periods.</li> </ul> <p>Despite these, country teams need more flexible mechanisms to support governments and institutions in the early stages of post-conflict settings while also meeting urgent humanitarian needs.</p> <p>(See also a linked achievement under 2.1 regarding a coherent and integrated UN system response to transition settings).</p>
<b>9.0 Gender mainstreaming in operational activities</b>	TCPR, IX Rec. 18	<p>Mainstreaming of gender concerns has occurred through thematic groups and completion of CCAs and UNDAFs;</p> <p>The inter-agency network on women and gender equality, chaired by UNIFEM, coordinated an assessment of 15 CCAs and UNDAFs; UNICEF led a parallel assessment in West Africa. Key recommendations were to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify roles and responsibilities at country level;</li> <li>• Improve quality assurance and support systems for joint analysis of gender concerns;</li> <li>• Strengthen the capacity of gender theme groups</li> <li>• Improve availability of gender disaggregated data</li> <li>• Strong collaboration established between UNIFEM and the regional commissions. For example, in 2002, 20 countries were supported to conduct gender budget analyses.</li> </ul>

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p.13.

<sup>48</sup> Guidance Note: UN Country Team Engagement in PRSPs, UNDG, 01 December, 2003.





